AN

# ACCOUNT

OF THE

# LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF THE

# REV. ALBAN BUTLER:

INTERSPERSED WITH OBSERVATIONS ON SOME SUBJECTS

OF

*SACRED AND PROFANE LITERATURE,*

MENTIONED IN HIS WRITINGS.

By CHARLES BUTLER, Esq.

BARRISTER AT LAW.

Quare quis tandem me reprehendat, si quantum cæteris ad festos dies ludorum celebrandos, quantum ad alias voluptates, et ad ipsam requiem animi et corporis conceditur temporis: Quantum alii tempestivis conviviis, quantum alcæ, quantum pilæ; tantum mihi egomet ad hæc studia recolenda, sumpsero. CIC. PRO. ARCHIA.

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Being a connected series of Miscellaneous Notes, on the Literature, Theology, and History, of the Zendavesta, the Vedams, the Edda, and the Coran.

TO

FRANCIS EYRE, ESQ.

OF

WARKWORTH,

IN THE

COUNTY OF OXFORD,

*THIS WORK*

IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

HIS OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

CHARLES BUTLER.

18

BRITISH MUSEUM

# SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

# LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF THE

# REV. ALBAN BUTLER.

## I.

THE REVEREND ALBAN BUTLER was the second son of Simon Butler, Esquire, of Appletree, in the county of Northampton, by Miss Ann Birch, daughter of Thomas Birch, Esquire, of Gorscot, in the county of Stafford. His family, for amplitude of possessions, and splendour of descent and alliances, had vied with the noblest and wealthiest of this kingdom, but was reduced to slender circumstances, at the time of his birth. A tradition in his family mentions, that Mr Simon Butler (our Author's grandfather) was the person confidentially employed by the Duke of Devonshire, and the Earl of Warrington, in inviting the Prince of Orange over to England: that he professed the Protestant religion, and that his great zeal for it was his motive for embarking so warmly in that measure; but that he never thought it would be attended with the political consequences which followed from it; that, when they happened, they preyed greatly on his mind; that, to fly from his remorse, he gave himself up to pleasure; and that, in a few years, he dissipated a considerable proportion of the remaining part of the family estate, and left what he did not sell of it, heavily incumbered.

At a very early age, our Author was sent to a school in Lancashire, and there applied himself to his studies with that unremitted application which, in every part of his life, he gave to literature. Sacred biography was even then his favourite pur-

suit. A gentleman, lately deceased, mentioned to the editor, that he remembered him at this school, and frequently heard him repeat, with a surprising minuteness of fact, and precision of chronology, to a numerous and wondering audience of little boys, the history of the chiefs and saints of the Saxon æra of our history. He then also was distinguished for his piety, and a punctual discharge of his religious duties.—About the age of eight years, he was sent to the English college at Douay. It appears, from the diary of that college, that Mr Holman of Warkworth (whose memory, for his extensive charities, is still in benediction in Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire), became security for the expences of his education. About this time he lost his father and mother. The latter, just before she died, wrote to him and his two brothers, the following beautiful letter:

"MY DEAR CHIDREN,

"Since it pleases Almighty God to take me out of this world, "as no doubt wisely foreseeing I am no longer a useful parent to "you, (for no person ought to be thought necessary in this "world, when God thinks proper to take them out); so, I hope, "you will offer the loss of me, with a resignation suitable to the "religion you are of, and offer yourselves. He who makes you "orphans so young, without a parent to take care of you, will "take you into his protection and fatherly care, if you do love "and serve him, who is the Author of all goodness. Above all "things, prepare yourselves, while you are young, to suffer pa-"tiently what afflictions he shall think proper to lay upon you; "for it is by this he trieth his best servants. In the first place, "give Him thanks for your education in the true faith, (which "many thousands want): and then, I beg of you earnestly to pe-"tition his direction, what state of life you shall undertake, whe-"ther it be for religion, or to get your livings in the world. No "doubt but you may be saved either way, if you do your duty "to God, your neighbour, and yourselves. And I beg of you to "make constant resolutions, rather to die a thousand times, if "possible, than quit your faith; and always have in your thoughts, "what you would think of, were you as nigh death as I now think "myself. There is no preparation for a good death, but a good

" life. Do not omit your prayers, and to make an act of contri-
" tion and examen of conscience every night, and frequent the
" blessed sacraments of the Church. I am so weak, I can say no
" more to you, but I pray God bless and direct you, and your
" friends to take care of you. Lastly, I beg of you never to for-
" get to pray for your poor father and mother, when they are not
" capable of helping themselves: so I take leave of you, hoping
" to meet you in heaven, to be happy for all eternity—

" Your affectionate Mother,

" ANN BUTLER."

Though our Author's memory, for the recollection of dates, was, in his very earliest years, remarkable, he found, when he first came to the college, great difficulty in learning his lessons by heart; so that, to enable him to repeat them in the school as well as the other boys, he was obliged to rise long before the college hour. By perseverance, however, he overcame this disheartening difficulty. Even while he was in the lowest schools, he was respected for his virtue and learning. One of his school-fellows writes thus of him: " The year after Mr Alban Butler's arrival
" at Douay, I was placed in the same school, under the same
" master, he being in the first class of rudiments, as it is there
" called, and I in the lowest. My youth and sickly constitution
" moved his innate goodness to pay me every attention in his
" power; and we soon contracted an intimacy that gave me eve-
" ry opportunity of observing his conduct, and of being fully ac-
" quainted with his sentiments. No one student in the college
" was more humble, more devout, more exact in every duty, or
" more obedient or mortified. He was never reproved or pu-
" nished but once; and then, for a fault of which he was not
" guilty. This undeserved treatment he received with silence,
" patience, and humility. In the hours alloted to play, he re-
" joiced in the meanest employments assigned to him by his com-
" panions, as to fetch their balls, run on their errands, &c. &c.
" Though often treated with many indignities by his thoughtless
" companions, on purpose to try his patience, he never was ob-
" served to shew the least resentment, but bore all with meek-
" ness and patience. By the frequent practice of these virtues

" he had attained so perfect an evenness of temper, that his mind " seemed never ruffled with the least emotion of anger. He re- " stricted himself, in every thing, to the strictest bounds of ne- " cessity. Great part of his monthly allowance of pocket-mo- " ney, and frequently of his daily food, went to the poor. So " perfectly had he subjected the flesh to the spirit, that he seem- " ed to feel no resistance from his senses in the service of God " and his neighbour."

As he advanced in age, his learning and virtue became more and more conspicuous. Monsieur Pellison*, in his life of the famous Huet, Bishop of Avranches, observes, that, " from his ten- " derest youth, he gave himself to study; that, at his rising, his " going to bed, and during his meals, he was reading, or had o- " thers to read to him; that neither the fire of youth, the inter- " ruption of business, the variety of his employments, the socie- " ty of his friends, nor the bustle of the world, could ever mo- " derate his ardour of study." The same may be said of our Author. He generally allowed himself no more than four hours sleep, and often past whole nights in study and prayer. All his day was spent in reading. When he was alone, he read; when he was in company, he read; at his meals, he read; in his walks, he read; when he was in a carriage, he read; when he was on horseback, he read; whatever he did, he read. It was his custom to make abridgments of the principal works he perused, and to copy large extracts from them: several bulky volumes of them have fallen into the hands of the editor. Many were surprised to see the rapidity with which he read, or rather run through books, and, at the same time, acquired a full and accurate knowledge of their contents.

## II.

After our Author had completed the usual course of study, he was admitted an Alumnus of Douay college, and appointed *Professor of Philosophy*. The Newtonian system of philosophy was, about that time, gaining ground in the foreign universities. He adopted it, in part, into the course of philosophy which he dictated to the students. He read and considered, with great at-

* Histoire de l'Academie, 1 vol. 102.

tention, the metaphysical works of Woolfe and Leibnitz. He did not admire them, and thought the system of pre-established harmony laid down in them, irreconcileable with the received belief or opinions of the Roman Catholic Church on the soul; and that much of their language, though susceptible of a fair interpretation, conveyed improper notions, or, at least, sounded offensively to catholic ears. The late Mr John Dunn, his contemporary at the college, frequently mentioned to the editor, the extreme caution which our Author used in inserting any thing new in his dictates, particularly on any subject connected with any tenet of religion. After teaching a course of philosophy, he was appointed *Professor of Divinity*. On this part of his life, the editor has been favoured by a gentleman deservedly famed for his erudition and piety, the reverend Robert Bannister, with a long letter, of which the reader is presented with an extract.

"I was contemporary with Mr Alban Butler in Douay col-
"lege, eight years; viz. from October 1741 to October 1749.
"But as I was but a boy the greater part of that time, I had
"not any intimacy with him, nor was I capable of knowing any
"thing concerning his interior, the manner of his prayer, or the
"degrees to which he ascended in it, or any extraordinary com-
"munications or elevations, to which the Holy Ghost, the great
"master and teacher of contemplation, might raise him. All
"that I can say, is, that he opened Douay college's great door
"to me and a gentleman whom I knew not, but who was so
"good as to bring me from Lisle in his coach, on Sunday between
"10 and 11, the 15th of October 1741; and the first sight of
"him appeared to me then, so meek and so amiable, that I
"thought I would choose him for my ghostly father; but ano-
"ther, I suppose, in rotation, adopted me. Mr Alban was my
"sole master in my first year of divinity in 1749, and dictated
"the two treatises *De Decalogo et de Incarnatione*; he also pre-
"sided over my defensions upon those two treatises, and over
"Mr James Talbot's (the late bishop of London) upon universal
"divinity. As to heroic acts of virtue, which strike with ad-
"miration all that see or hear of them, I cannot recollect more,
"than an uniform, constant observance of all the duties of a
"priest, professor and confessarius. He was always at morning

" meditations, seldom omitted the celebration of the holy sacri-
" fice of the mass, which he said with a heavenly composure,
" sweetness, and recollection; studying and teaching assiduously,
" dictating with an unwearied patience so equally and leisurely,
" that every one could, if he wished to do it, write his dictates,
" in a clear and legible hand; nor do I remember, that he ever
" sent a substitute to dictate for him; so exact and punctual he
" was in his duty as a professor. I never knew one more ready
" to go to the confession-seat, at the first intimation of any, even
" the least or youngest boy. He heard his penitents with won-
" derful meekness; and his penetration, learning, judgment, and
" piety, were such, as to move them to place in him a singular
" confidence. He frequently visited the military hospital, to in-
" struct, exhort, and hear the confessions of Irish soldiers. He
" sometimes assembled a number of them, when they happened
" to be quartered in Douay, in the college-church of St Thomas
" of Canterbury, and preached to them. In one of his sermons,
" I remember he told them, for their example and encourage-
" ment, that there are more soldiers saints, than of any other vo-
" cation, or state, or condition. As poor, and often distressed,
" Irish men and women, frequently came to Douay, he was al-
" ways ready to relieve them, and administer both corporal and
" spiritual succours. It can never be forgotten, what attention,
" solicitude, and care, he had in the year 1745 of our English
" soldiers, wounded and maimed, who were brought prisoners
" to Douay, and quartered in the barracks, in great numbers,
" after the battle of Fontenoy. He animated, both by words and
" example, all the young priests, and all in holy orders at the
" college, to visit them, to instruct and instil into them serious
" thoughts of saving their souls, by embracing the only saving
" faith, and by true repentance. He also procured for them tem-
" poral succour and relief, so beneficently, that the Duke of
" Cumberland, then generalissimo of the British and allied ar-
" mies, being informed of it, promised him a special protection,
" whensoever he came over into England. Scarce any thing af-
" fords one a better proof of Mr Alban's eminent spirit of piety
" and great understanding, discretion, and light in spiritual mat-
" ters, than his familiarity and friendship with M. Jean Baptiste

" de Villèrs, President of the seminary des Eveques in the uni-
" versity of Douay, who died October 7th, 1746, the death of
" a saint, after having lived the life of one for 78 years. This
" M. de Villèrs was eminent in all supernatural and moral vir-
" tues, but he concealed them under an amiable simplicity, and
" a plain unaffected behaviour, or exterior, unless charity and
" zeal for the glory of God and salvation of souls required their
" open and full exertion; and, notwithstanding his great learn-
" ing, (which he had acquired by an excellent genius and diligent
" application to sacred studies), and his great and solid fund of
" piety, he was as docile as an infant; so timorous and diffident
" of his own judgement, that he would neither do nor decide any
" thing without counsel. With this sentiment of diffidence and
" humility, he often visited (says M. Leroy, the faithful imita-
" tor and writer of the history of his life), a young professor, a
" foreigner (that is, Alban Butler) and passed an hour or two
" in his company in the afternoon, once every week, and some-
" times twice, several years until his edifying death. Their con-
" versation together was solely about various points of morality;
" about the direction of souls, and the methods of arriving at
" perfection in every action and intention; how to teach devout
" persons a habit of making continual aspirations to God, by acts
" of love, oblation, entire sacrifice of their hearts, of humility,
" &c. Mr. de Villèrs would not suffer more than half a small
" faggot to be kindled for him in the severest weather, saying to
" Mr Alban, " the other part may serve some poor person: "
" As to wine, or any other liquor, he never drank any but at
" meal time. I remember to have heard an instance of Mr Al-
" ban's meekness, for I am not a witness of it. When he was
" presiding over one of his students in divinity in the public hall
" of Douay college, a disputant, who was probably much offend-
" ed at some proposition in the thesis, as being opposite to some
" favourite opinion of his school or religious family, said to him,
" with intolerable rudeness, *babes mel in ore, sed fel in corde*:
" to which he made no reply, nor shewed the least resentment.
" Mr Alban Butler was totally averse to the system of probabi-
" lism, and to all assertions that favour laxity in morals. This
" is evident from the dictates which he delivered to us, from his

" treatise *de Decalogo*, de *actibus humanis*, in his *Epitome moralis* " *sacramentorum*, *&c.* It is still more evident, from his *Epi-* " *tome de sex prioribus conciliis œcumenicis in calce tractatus de In-* " *carnatione*, that he had the highest veneration for the Holy See, " and for him who sits in the chair of St Peter; that he constant- " ly held and maintained the rights and singular prerogatives of " St Peter and his successors, in calling, presiding over, and " confirming general or œcumenical councils; the Pope's superi- " ority over the whole church, and over the whole college of bi- " shops, and over a general council; the irreformability of his doc- " trinal decisions in points of faith and morals; his supreme pow- " er to dispense, (when there is cause) in the canons of general " councils; in short, the plenitude of his authority over the whole " church without exception or limitation, *Nihil excipitur ubi dis-* " *tinguitur nihil.*"

## III.

FROM the letter, of which we have presented the reader with an extract, it appears what our Author's sentiments were on the nature and extent of the spiritual power of the See of Rome. It has frequently been said, that he was the editor of Doctor Holden's *Analysis Fidei*: had this been the fact, it would have been a strong proof of an alteration of his sentiments on those points; but, after particular enquiry, the editor finds the assertion to be wholly unfounded.

On the celebrated questions, *Of the infallibility of the Pope; and his right to the deposing power*, our Author thus expresses himself, in one of his letters on Mr Bower's History of the Popes: " Mr Bower having been educated in the Catholic schools, could " not but know that, though some private divines think that " the Pope, by the assistance of some special providence, cannot " err in the decisions of faith solemnly published by him, with " the mature advice of his council, or of the clergy or divines of " his church, yet, that this is denied by others; and that the " learned Bossuet, and many others, especially of the school of " Sorbon, have written warmly against that opinion; and that " no Catholic looks upon it as an article or term of communion. " It is the infallibility of the whole church, whether assembled

" in a general council, or dispersed over the world, of which " they speak in their controversial disputations. Yet, this writ- " er, at every turn, confounds these two things together only to " calumniate, and impose on the public. If he had proved that " some popes had erred in faith, he would have no more defeat- " ed the article of supremacy, than he would disinherit a king " by arraigning him of bad policy. The Catholic faith teaches " the Pope to be the supreme pastor of the church established by " Christ, and that this church, founded by Christ on a rock, " shall never be overcome by hell, or cease to be his true spouse. " For he has promised, that his true spirit shall direct it in all " truth to the end of the world. But Mr Bower never found " the infallibility of the Pope in our creed; and knows very well " that no such article is proposed by the church, or required of " any one. Therefore the whole chain of his boastings, which is " conducted through the work, falls to the ground.

" What he writes against the deposing power in Popes, cer- " tainly cannot be made a reproach against the Catholics of Eng- " land, France, Spain, &c. It is a doctrine neither taught nor " tolerated in any Catholic kingdom that I know of, and which " many Catholics write as warmly against as Mr Bower could " wish."——

## IV.

WHILE our Author continued at the college of Douay, his first publication made its appearance; This was his *Letters on the History of the Popes, published by Mr Archibald Bower.* That gentleman had entered into the society of Jesus, and acquired a reputation for learning and talents. He came into England, embraced the religion of the established church, and endeavoured to recommend himself to the favour of his new friends, by his History of the Lives of the Popes. He also published an account of his escape from Italy, and of his motives for quitting it. The truth of the account became a subject of controversy. It was disbelieved, not only by Catholics, but Protestants. Dr Douglas, the present Bishop of Salisbury, wrote an excellent pamphlet to expose its falsehood and absurdity. It carried great improbability on the face of it. Mr Bower was a lively writer, and de-

fended himself with adroitness; but he was not equal to the composition of the history which he undertook to write. He was of the numerous list of authors, who, when they sit down to write, have to learn what they shall write, rather than to write what they have already learned. The errors which our Author exposes in his letters are sometimes the errors of a very young writer. The letters are written with ease and good humour; they shew various and extensive learning, a vigorous and candid mind. They met with universal applause.

## V.

In the year 1745, our Author accompanied the late Earl of Shrewsbury, and the Honourable James Talbot and Thomas Talbot, on their *Travels through France and Italy*. He wrote a full, entertaining, and interesting account of them. As it will be published, the editor makes no extracts from it in this place. He was always solicitous, that the noble personages committed to his care should see whatever deserved attention, and be introduced to persons distinguished by their rank, talents, or virtue. He drew out for them a comparative view of the Greek, Roman, and Gothic Architecture, an account of the different schools of Painting, and an abridgment of the lives, and remarks on the different characters, of the most eminent Painters. These will be found in his Travels. He kept them from all stage-entertainments:—"The stage-entertainments," (he says in one of his letters), "I can give no account of, as we never would see any; they "being certainly very dangerous, and the school of the passions "and sin, most justly abhorred by the church and the fathers. "Among us, Collier, Law, &c.; among the French, the late "prince of Conti, Doctor Voisin, Nicole, &c. have said enough "to satisfy any Christian; though Tertullian, St Cyprian, St "Chrysostom, are still more implacable enemies of the stage. "However, we saw the stages, for their architecture, where this "was curious." His opinion of the evil tendency of stage-entertainments continued with him through life.

## VI.

On his return from his travels, *Our Author was sent on the English Mission.* He had long been engaged in his great work of the Lives of the Saints, and was then bringing it to a conclusion. He naturally, therefore, wished to be settled in London, for the convenience of its public libraries, and the opportunities it affords of intercourse with men of letters. But the Vicar Apostolic of the Middle District claimed him, as belonging to that district, and appointed him to a mission in Staffordshire. This was a severe mortification to our Author; he respectfully remonstrated; but the Vicar Apostolic was inexorable, and required his immediate obedience. A gentleman, who lived in the same house with him at the time, has mentioned to the editor, that he was with him when the summons came; and that, on receiving it, he appeared much hurt, retired for half an hour to his oratory, and soon after set out for his country mission.

From Staffordshire he removed to Warkworth, the seat of Francis Eyre, Esquire, to whom these sheets are dedicated. He had the highest opinion of a good missioner, and frequently declared, that he knew of no situation so much to be envied, while the missioner had a love of his duties, and confined himself to them; none so miserable, when the missioner had lost the love of them, and was fond of the pleasures of life: "Such a one," he used to say, "would seldom have the means of gratifying his "taste for pleasure; he would frequently find, that, in company, "if he met with outward civility, he was the object of silent "blame; and that, if he gave pleasure as a companion, no one "would resort to him as a priest." He had a manuscript, written by a Mr Cox, an English missioner who lived in the beginning of the present century, in which these sentiments were expressed forcibly and with great feeling: he often mentioned it. But no person was less critical on the conduct of others, none exacted less from them, than our Author. He was always at the command of a fellow clergyman, and ready to do him every kind of good office. To the poor, his door was always open. When he resided in London, in quality of chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, he was under no obligation, strictly speaking, of at-

tending to any person except the Duke himself and his family; but he was at the call of every one who wanted any spiritual or temporal assistance which it was in his power to afford. The poor at length flocked to him in such numbers, that, much in opposition to his wishes, his brother, with whom he then lived, was obliged to give general orders that none of them should be admitted to him. He was ever ready to oblige. Mons. Olivet relates of Huet, the bishop of Avranches, that he was so absorbed in his studies, as sometimes to neglect his pastoral duties; that once a poor peasant waited on him respecting some matter of importance, and was refused admittance, "his Lordship being "at his studies;" upon which the peasant retired, muttering, with great indignation, "that he hoped they should never have "another bishop who had not finished his studies before he came "among them:" but our Author's "being at his studies," was never a reason with him for refusing to see any one. It was often unpleasant to observe how much his good humour in this respect was abused.

## VII.

Our Author did not remain long in Staffordshire—Edward Duke of Norfolk, (to whom the present Duke is second in succession), applied to the late Mr Challoner for a person to be his chaplain, and to *superintend the education of Mr Edward Howard*, his nephew and presumptive heir. Mr Challoner fixed upon our Author to fill that situation. His first residence, after he was appointed to it, was at Norwich, in an house generally called The Duke's Palace. Thither some large boxes of books belonging to him were directed, but by mistake were sent to the Bishop's palace. The Bishop opened them, and, finding them full of Roman Catholic books, refused to deliver them. It has been mentioned, that, after the battle of Fontenoy, our Author was very active in serving the English prisoners, and that the Duke of Cumberland returned him thanks for his conduct, and made him an offer of his services, if he should have occasion for them after his return to England. On this seizure of his books, our Author applied to the Duke; his Highness immediately wrote

to the Bishop, and soon after the books were sent to their owner.

Mr Edward Howard, by our Author's advice, was first sent to the school of the English clergy, at a small village near Douay, called Esquerchin, of which the most pious and respectable Mr Tichborne Blount was president. After some years, he was sent to complete his education at Paris; and thither our Author accompanied him. Mr Edward Howard was the Marcellus of the English Catholics: never did a noble youth raise greater expectations; but he was suddenly taken ill, and died after an illness of a few days. On that melancholy occasion the family expressed great pleasure in the recollection of the religious education he had received from our Author.

## VIII.

During our Author's stay at Paris, he finally completed and sent to the press his great work on the *Lives of the Saints*. We have seen, that, from his tenderest years, he had discovered his turn for sacred biography. At a very early period of his life, he conceived the plan of his work; and from that time pursued it with undeviating attention. He qualified himself for an able execution of it, by unremitted application to every branch of profane or sacred literature connected with it. He was a perfect master of the Italian, Spanish, and French languages. The last he spoke and wrote with fluency and purity. He was also perfect master of the Latin and Greek languages. At an advanced period of his life, he mentioned to the editor, that he could then understand the works of St John Chrysostom as easily in the original as in the Latin interpretation; but that the Greek of St Gregory Nazianzen was too difficult for him. A few years before he died, he amused himself with an enquiry into the true pronunciation of the Greek language, and in preparing for the press some sheets of an intended Greek grammar. To attain that degree of knowledge of the Greek language is given to few: Menage mentions, that he was acquainted with three persons only who could read a Greek writer without an interpreter. Our Author had also some skill in the oriental languages. In biblical reading, in positive divinity, in canon law, in the writings of the

fathers, in ecclesiastical antiquities, and in modern controversy, the depth and extent of his erudition are unquestionable. He was also skilled in heraldry; every part of ancient and modern geography was familiar to him. He had advanced far beyond the common learning of the schools, in the different branches of philosophy; and, even in botany and medicine, he was deeply read. In this manner he had qualified himself to execute the work he undertook.

## IX.

THE present section is intended to give *An Account of some of the principal Works he consulted in the composition of it.* It will contain, 1*st*, some remarks on the attention of the Church, during the early ages of Christianity, to preserve the Memory of the Martyrs and Saints: 2*dly*, some account of the Acts of the Martyrs: 3*dly*, some account of the sacred Calendars: 4*thly*, some account of the Martyrologies: 5*thly*, some account of the Menæon and Menologies of the Greek church: 6*thly*, some account of the early Agiographists: 7*thly*, some account of the Bollandists: and, 8*thly*, some account of the process of the Beatification and Canonization of Saints.

IX. 1. The Roman Catholic Church has ever been solicitous, *that the lives and miracles of those who have been eminent for their sanctity, should be recorded for the edification of the faithful.* St Clement, the second successor of St Peter in the See of Rome, is said to have divided the fourteen districts of that city among seven notaries, assigning two districts to each of them, with directions to form a minute and accurate account of the martyrs who suffered within them. About 150 years from that time, Pope Fabian put the notaries under the care of deacons and subdeacons. The same attention to the actions and sufferings of the martyrs was shewn in the provinces. Of this, the letter of the church of Smyrna, giving an account of the martyrdom of St Polycarp; the letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne, giving an account of the martyrs who suffered in those cities; and the letter of St Dionysius the bishop of Alexandria, to Fabius the bishop of Antioch, on the martyrs who suffered under the emperor Decius,—are remarkable instances. "Our ancestors," says Pontius, in the be-

ginning of the acts of St Cyprian, "held those who suffered martyrdom, though only catechumens, or of the lowest rank, in "such veneration, as to commit to writing almost every thing "that related to them." Nor was this attention confined to those who obtained the crown of martyrdom. Care was taken that the lives of all should be written, who were distinguished by their virtues, particularly if they had been favoured with the gift of miracles.

IX. 2. The lives of the martyrs and saints, written in this manner, were called *their acts*. They were often collected into volumes. One of the earliest of these collections was made by Eusebius, the father of church history. Some of the lives he inserted in the body of his great historical work: he also published a separate collection of them; it was greatly esteemed, but has not reached our time: many others were published. These accounts of the virtues and sufferings of the martyrs were received by the faithful with the highest respect. They considered them to afford a glorious proof of the truth of the christian faith, and of the holiness and sublimity of its doctrines. They felt themselves stimulated by them to imitate the heroic acts of virtue and constancy which they placed before their eyes, and to rely on the assistance of heaven, when their own hour of trial should arrive. Thus the vocal blood of the martyrs was a powerful exhortation, both to induce the infidel to embrace the faith of Christ, and to incite the faithful to the practice of its precepts. The church, therefore, always recommended the frequent reading of the acts of the martyrs, and inserted the mention of them in her liturgy. This Ruinart proves by many examples: he also shews, that the greatest care was taken to procure the genuine acts of the martyrs; or, when they could not be had, to procure exact accounts of their trials and sufferings. By this means the church was in possession of authentic histories of the persecutions she had suffered, and through which she had finally triumphed over paganism, and of particular accounts of the principal sufferers. The greatest part of them was lost in the general wreck which sacred and profane literature suffered from the barbarians who overturned the Roman Empire. In every age, however, some were found, who carefully preserved whatever they could save, of those sacred

treasures. Copies were frequently made of them; and thus, in this, as in every other important branch of christian learning, the chain of tradition has been left unbroken. Much however of these sacred documents of church history has been irretrievably lost; and, speaking generally, the remaining part came down to us in an imperfect state. Hence Vives, at the end of the 15th century, exclaimed, "What a shame it is to the Christian world, "that the acts of our martyrs have not been published with great-"er truth and accuracy!" The important task of publishing them in that manner, was at length undertaken by Dom Ruinart, a Maurist monk, in his *Acta primorum Martyrum sincera et selecta*. He executed it in a manner that gained him universal applause. His prefatory discourse, respecting the number of martyrs, has been generally admired. An invaluable accession to this branch of sacred literature, was published by Stephen Evodius Assemanni, in two volumes folio, at Rome in 1748. The title of the work expresses its contents: "*Acta Sanctorum Mar-*"*tyrum orientalium et occidentalium, editore Stephano Evodeo*"*Assemanno, qui textum Chaldaicum recensuit, notis vocalibus a-*"*nimavit, Latine vertit, et annotationibus illustravit.*" It is to be observed, that the eastern and western martyrs mentioned in this place, are not the martyrs of the eastern or Greek church, and the martyrs of the Latin or western church, in which sense the words eastern and western are generally used by ecclesiastical writers. By the eastern martyrs, Assemani denotes the martyrs who suffered in the countries which extend from the eastern bank of the Euphrates, over Mesopotamia and Chaldea to the Tigris and the parts beyond it; by the western, he denotes the martyrs who suffered in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Stephen Assemanni was the nephew of Joseph Assemanni, whose Kalendaria will be mentioned in another place. Joseph was first perfect of the Vatican library: Stephen was archbishop of Apamea; both of them were Maronite monks, and sent into the east by Pope Clement XII., to purchase manuscripts.

IX. 3. It was the pious custom of the early Christians, to celebrate yearly the memory of the martyrs, on the days on which they suffered. On that day, the martyr was considered to be born to a life of glory and immortality, and, with respect

to that second life, it was called the day of his birth. The different churches therefore were careful to preserve an exact account of the particular days on which the martyrs obtained the crown of martyrdom. The book which contained this account was called a *Calendar*. At first the Calendar contained the mention of the martyrs only; but, in the course of time, the Confessors, or those who, without arriving at the glory of martyrdom, had confessed their faith in Christ by their heroic virtues, were admitted to the same honour. The Calendars were preserved in the churches; a Calendar in the church of Rome was published by Boucher; another by Leo Allatius; a third by Joannes Fronto, chancellor of Paris, and cannon regular of the church of St Genevieve at Paris. A most ancient calendar of the church of Carthage was published by Mabillon. But under this head no publication is more respectable than Joseph Assemani's *Calendaria Ecclesiæ universæ notis illustrata.*

IX. 4. The Calendars gave rise to the *Martyrologies*; the object of them was to collect, in one volume, from the Calendars of the different churches, the names of the martyrs and confessors throughout the world, with a brief mention of the day of their decease, and the place in which they suffered, or which they had illustrated by their birth, their residence, their rank, or their virtues. The Roman martyrology is mentioned in the following terms by St Gregory (Lib. 8. Epist. Indict. 1), in a letter to Eulogius, the bishop of Alexandria. "We," says his holiness, "have the names of almost all the martyrs collected into one volume, and referred to the days on which they suffered, and we "celebrate the solemn sacrifice of the mass daily in their honour. But our Calendar does not contain the particulars of "their sufferings; it only mentions their names, and the place "and time of their martyrdom." The Roman Calendar seems to have been adopted generally through the western church. It certainly was received in England. At the council held at Shovesham in 747, by Cuthbert, the archbishop of Canterbury, it was ordered, "That throughout the year, the feasts of the saints "should be celebrated on the days appointed by the Martyrology "of the church of Rome, with the proper psalms." It was once generally believed to have been composed by St Jerom; but this

opinion is now universally rejected. It suffered much in the middle ages. Pope Gregory XIII., immediately after he had completed the great work of reforming the Calendar, used the most earnest endeavours to procure a correct edition of the Roman martyrology. He committed the care of it to some of the most distinguished writers of his time on ecclesiastical subjects. Among them, Bellarmine, Baronius, and Gavant, deserve particular mention. With this edition, Baronius himself was not satisfied. He published another edition in 1586; and afterwards, at the instigation of Cardinal Sirlet, published a still more correct edition, with notes, in 1598. He prefixed to his edition a dissertation, in which he appears to have exhausted the subject. A further correction of the Roman Martyrology was made by Pope Urban VIII. They were all surpassed by that published by Pope Benedict XIV at Cologne in 1751. But the most useful edition is that published at Paris, in 1661, by Father Lubin, an Augustinian friar. It is accompanied with excellent notes and geographical tables. Politus, an Italian divine, published in 1751 the first volume of a new edition of the Roman Martyrology. It comprises the month of January, but the plan of annotation is so extended, that it fills 500 folio pages of the smallest print; from the time of Drackenborch's edition of Livy, so prolix a commentary had not been seen. Among other principal Martyrologies, is that of the *venerable Bede*. After several faulty editions of it had appeared, it was correctly published by Henschenius and Papebrooch, and afterwards by Smith, at the end of his edition of Bede's Ecclesiastical history. Notwithstanding Bede's great and deserved celebrity, the Martyrology of *Usuard*, a Benedictine monk, was in more general use; he dedicated it to Charles the Bald, and died about 875. It was published by Solerius at Antwerp, in 1714, and by Dom. Bouillard in 1718; but the curious still seek for the earlier edition by Molanus, in 1568, as, in the subsequent editions, some parts of it were omitted. Another Martyrology of renown is that of *Ado*; he was archbishop of Vienne in Dauphinê, and died in 875. The best edition of it is that by Rosweyde, in 1613, published at Rome in 1745.—Such have been the exertions of the church of Rome, to perpetuate the memory of those who have illustrated her by their virtues. During the most severe persecutions, in the general wreck of the arts and

sciences, in the midst of the public and private calamities which attended the destruction of the Roman empire, the providence of God always raised some pious and enlightened men, who preserved the deposit of faith, and transmitted to future times the memory of whatever had been most virtuous in former ages or their own.

IX. 5. *The Greek Church* has also shewn great attention to preserve the Memory of the holy Martyrs and Saints. This appears from her Menæon and Menologia. *The Menæon* is divided into 12 months, and each month is contained in a volume. All the saints, whose festivals occur in that month, have their proper day assigned to them in it; the rubric of the divine office, to be performed on that day, is mentioned; the particulars of the office follow; an account of the life and actions of the saint is inserted; and sometimes an engraving of him is added. If it happen that the saint has not his peculiar office, a prose or hymn in his praise is generally introduced. The greater solemnities have an appropriate office. From this the intelligent reader will observe, that the Menæon of the Greeks is nearly the same as a work would be, which should unite in itself the Missal and Breviary of the Roman Catholic Church. It was printed in 12 volumes in folio at Venice. Bollandus mentions, that Raderus, a Tyrolese Jesuit, had translated the whole of the Menæon, and pronounced it to be free from schism or heresy.

*The Menologium* answers to the Latin Martyrology. There are several Menologia, as, at different times, great alterations have been made in them. But the ground-work of them all is the same, so that they are neither wholly alike nor wholly different. A translation of a Menologium into Latin by Cardinal Sirlet, was published by Henry Canisius, in the third volume of his *Lectiones Antiquæ*. The Greek original with a new version, was published by Annibal Albani, at Urbino, in 1727. From these works it is most clear, that the Greek Church invokes the saints, and implores their intercession with God: "*Haud ob-*"*scurè ostendit,*" says Walachius, *Græcos eò cultu prosequi* "*homines in sanctorum ordinem ascriptos, ut illos invocent.*" Bib. Theologica, vol. iii. 668. From the Menæon and the Menologium, Raderus published a collection of pious and entertaining

narratives, under the title of *Viridarum Sanctorum*. It is to be wished that some gentleman would employ his leisure in a translation of it. We should then be furnished, from the works of the Agiographists of the eastern church, with a collection of pious and instructing narratives, similar to those in the well known *Histoires choisies*. One of the most curious articles inserted in the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists, is the *Muscovite or Russian Calendar*, with the engravings of the saints. It was first published by Father Possevin. He praises the Russians for the great attention to decency which they observe in their pictures and engravings of holy subjects. He mentions, that the Russians who accompanied him in his return to Rome, observed, with surprise, in the Italian paintings of saints, a want of the like attention. Father Papebrooch, when he cites this passage, adopts the remark, and loudly calls on Innocent XII. to attend to the general decency of all public paintings and statues. *A Greek Calendar of the Saints*, in Hexameter verse, accompanies the Russian Calendar, in the *Acta Sanctorum*; both are illustrated with notes by Father Papebrooch.

IX. 6. We proceed to the *Lives of the Saints written by individuals*. For these our attention must be first directed to the Agiographists of the Greek church. The 8th century may be considered as the period when Grecian literature had reached its lowest state of depression; in the ninth, Bardas Cæsar, the brother of the Empress Theodora, protected letters; from that time they were constantly cultivated by the Greeks; so that Constantinople, till it was taken by Mahomet, was never without its historians, poets, or philosophers. Compared with the writings of the ancients, their compositions seem lifeless and unnatural; we look among them in vain either for original genius or successful imitation. Still they are entitled to our gratitude; many of the precious remains of antiquity have come down to us only in their extracts and abridgements; and their volumnious compilations have transmitted to us much useful information which has no other existence. Sacred biography, in particular, has great obligations to them. The earliest work on that subject we owe to the care which the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus bestowed on the literary education of his son; an example which,

at the distance of about 600 years, was successfully rivalled by the elegant edition of the Delphin Classics, published under the auspices of Lewis XIV. But the Greek emperor had this advantage over the French monarch, that he himself was the author of some of the works published for the use of his son. In the first (published by Lerch and Reisch at Leipsic in 1751), he describes the ceremonial of the Byzantine court; the second (published by Banduri, in his *Imperium Orientale*), is a geographical survey of the provinces, or, as he calls them, the *Themata* of the empire; the third, which some ascribe to the Emperor Leo his father, describes the prevailing system of military tactics; the fourth delineates the political relations and intercourse of the court of Byzantium with the other states. His Geoponics, (published by Nicholas Niclas at Leipsic, in 1731, in two volumes 8vo), were written with a view of instructing his subjects in agriculture. By his direction, a collection of historical examples of vice and virtue was compiled in 53 books, and *Simeon Metaphrastes*, the great logothete or chancellor of the empire, composed his Lives of the Saints. Several of them were published, with a Latin translation, by the care of Lipoman, the bishop of Verona. Cardinal Bellarmin accuses Metaphrastes of giving too much loose to his imagination: "He inserts," says the Cardinal, "such accounts of conversations of the martyrs with their persecutors, and such accounts of conversions of by-standers, as exceed belief. He mentions many and most wonderful miracles on "the destruction of the temples and idols, and on the death of the "persecutors, of which nothing is said by the ancient historians." We next come to *Jacobus de Voragine*, a Dominican friar and archbishop of Genoa, in 1292. His *Golden Legend* was the delight of our ancestors, during the ages which preceded the revival of letters. The library of no monastery was without it. Like the essays of Montaigne, it was to be found on the shelf of every private person; and, for a long time after the invention of printing, no work more often issued from the press. After enjoying the highest degree of reputation, it lost much of its celebrity, in consequence of the Lives of Saints published by *Mombritius* in two immense volumes in folio, about the year 1480, from manuscripts in the library of the church of St John of Lateran; and in con-

sequence of the Lives of Saints published by *Surius* a Carthusian monk. The first edition of Surius's work was published in 1570-1575, in six volumes; the second appeared in 1578, the third and most complete was published, in twelve volumes, in 1015. That he frequently shews too much credulity, and betrays a want of taste, must be admitted; but his works are allowed to breathe a spirit of piety; his candour, and desire to be accurate, are discernible in every part of his writings; and his learning, for the age in which he lived, was considerable. In *Ribadeneira* the line of ancient Agiographists respectably finishes.

While candour and good taste must allow, that, even in the best of the compilations we have mentioned, there is great want of critical discernment, and that they are wholly deficient in elegance, and the artificial beauties of composition, justice requires that their defects should not be exaggerated. Still less should an intention to deceive, even on the pretence of edification, be imputed to them. Whatever may have been either the error or the criminality of some of her members, the church herself, in this, as in every other instance, has always inculcated the duty of sincerity and truth, and reprobated a deviation from them, even on the specious pretence of producing good. On this subject our Author thus forcibly expresses himself, in one of his letters on Mr Bower's History of the Lives of the Popes: "It is very unjust "to charge the Popes or the Catholic Church, with countenan- "cing knowingly false legends; seeing all the divines of that com- "munion unanimously condemn all such forgeries, as lies in "things of great moment, and grievous sins: and all the coun- "cils, popes, and other bishops, have always expressed the great- "est horror of such villanies; which no cause or circumstances "whatever can authorise, and which, in all things relating to re- "ligion, are always of the most heinous nature. Hence the au- "thors, when detected, have been always punished with the ut- "most severity. Dr Burnet himself, says, that those who feign- "ed a revelation at Basil, of which he gives a long detail, with "false circumstances, in his letters on his travels, were all burnt "at stakes for it, which we read more exactly related by Surius, "in his Commentary on his own Times. The truth is, that "many false legends of true martyrs were forged by heretics, as

" were those of St George, condemned by Pope Gelasius, as ma-
" ny false gospels were soon after the birth of Christianity, of
" which we have the names of near 50 extant. Other wicked or
" mistaken persons have sometimes been guilty of a like impos-
" ture. A priest at Ephesus forged acts of St Paul's voyages,
" out of veneration for that apostle, and was deposed for it by St
" John the evangelist, as we learn from Tertullian. To instance
" examples of this nature would form a complete history. For
" the Church has always most severely condemned all manner of
" forgeries. Sometimes the more virtuous and remote from
" fraud a person is, the more unwilling he is to suspect an im-
" posture in others. Some great and good men have been im-
" posed upon by lies, and have given credit to false histories, but
" without being privy to the forgery; and nothing erroneous,
" dangerous, or prejudical, was contained in what they unwarily
" admitted. However, if credulity in private histories was too
" easy in any former age, certainly scepticism and infidelity are
" the characters of this in which we live. No histories, except
" those of holy Scripture, are proposed as parts of divine revela-
" tion or articles of faith; all others rest upon their bare histori-
" cal authority. They who do not think this good and sufficient
" in any narrations, do well to suggest modestly their reasons:
" yet may look upon them at least as parables, and leave others
" the liberty of judging for themselves without offence. But
" Mr Bower says, p. 177, " The Roman Breviary is the most
" authentic book the church of Rome has, after the Scripture;
" it would be less dangerous, at least in Italy, to deny any truth
" revealed in the Scripture, than to question any fable related in
" the Breviary." Catholic divines teach, that every title in the
" holy Scriptures is sacred, divinely inspired, and the word of
" God dictated by the Holy Ghost. Even the definitions of ge-
" neral councils do not enjoy an equal privilege; they are indeed
" the oracles of an unerring guide in the doctrine of faith; which
" guide received, together with the scriptures, the true sense and
" meaning of the articles of faith contained in them; and, by the
" special protection of the Holy Ghost, invariably preserves the
" same by tradition from father to son, according to the promises
" of Christ. But the church receives no new revelation of faith,

" and adds nothing to that which was taught by the apostles. " 2*dly*, Its decisions are not supernaturally infallible in matters " of fact, as scripture histories are, but only in matters of faith. " Nor do Catholics say, that its expressions, even in decisions of " faith, are strictly dictated by the Holy Ghost, or suggested " from him, by any immediate revelation or inspiration; but " only, that the church is directed by his particular guidance, ac- " cording to his divine truths revealed and delivered to his church " by his apostles. As to the Roman Breviary, the prayers con- " sist, for the greatest part, of the psalms, and other parts of the " holy scriptures, to which the same respect is due which we pay " to the divine books. The short lessons from the homilies, or " other works of approved fathers, especially those fathers who " are mentioned by Gelasius I. in his decree, carry with them " the authority of their venerable authors. As it was the cus- " tom in the primitive ages to read, in the churches or assem- " blies, the acts of the most illustrious martyrs, of which frequent " mention is made in those of St Polycarp, &c. some short his- " tories of the martyrs and other saints, have been always insert- " ed in the Breviary, to which only an historical assent is due, " whence they have been sometimes altered and amended. These " are chiefly such as are judged authentic and probable by the " Cardinals Baronius and Bellarmine, who revised those lessons, " in the last correction under Clement VIII. Gavant, who was " himself one of the revisers of the Breviary, and secretary to the " congregation, writes thus: [in Breviar. sect. 5. c. 12. n. 15. " p. 18.] " The second lessons from the histories of the saints " were revised by Bellarmine and Baronius, who rejected what " could be justly called in question: in which difficult task they " thought it best to restore the truth of history with the least " change possible, and to retain those things which had a certain " degree of probability, and had the authority of some grave " voucher, though the contrary sentiment had perhaps more pa- " trons." In computing the years of the popes, the chronology " of Baronius was judged the most exact, and retained. Histori- " cal facts, no ways revealed or contained in Scripture, cannot be " made an object of divine faith. If edifying histories are inserted " in the church-office, they stand upon their own credit. Such

" only ought to be chosen which are esteemed authentic. This " rule has been always followed when any were compiled. If " the compilers are found afterwards to have been mistaken, it is " no where forbid to correct them *. This has been often done " by the order of several popes,"

IX. 7. Among *the modern Collections of the Lives of Saints*, of which our Author availed himself, in the work we are speaking of, the histories which different religious have written of their own orders, hold a distinguished place. But he was indebted to no work so much as the *Acta Sanctorum of the Bollandists*. That noble collection was first projected by Father Rosweyde of the Society of Jesus. He died before he had completely digested his plan. Fortunately for the lovers either of sacred history or sacred literature, it was taken up by Father Bollandus of the same society, and has been carried down to the 11th day of October, inclusive. Those who, after Bollandus's decease, succeeded him in his undertaking, were from him called Bollandists.

As far as the editor has been able to learn, the work was composed by the following authors, and published in the number of volumes and years following :

| Months. | No. of Vols. all in fol. | Years of their appearance. | Authors. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 2. | 1643 | Bollandus and Henschenius. |
| Feb. | 3. | 1658 | Bollandus and Henschenius. |
| Mar. | 3. | 1668 | Henschenius and Papebrochius. |
| April | 3. | 1678 | Henschenius and Papebrochius. |
| May | 7. | 1680-1688 | Henschenius, Papebrochius, Baertius and Janningus. |
| June | 6. | 1695-1715 | Henschenius, Papebrochius, Baertius, Janningus, and Sollerius. |
| July | 7. | 1719-1731 | Janningus, Sollerius, Pinius, Cuperus, and Boschinus. |

* Nimia profecto simplicitate peccant, qui scandalizantur quoties audiunt aliquid ex jam olim creditis, et juxta breviarii prescriptum hodiedum recitandis, in disputationem adduci. *Diss. Bollandiæ.* vol. 2. p. 140.

| Months. | No. of Vols. all in fol. | Years of their appearance. | Authors. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Aug. | 6. | 1733-1743 | Sollerius, Pinius, Cuperius, Boschius, and Stiltingus. |
| Sept. | 8. | 1746-1762 | Pinius, Stiltingus, Limpenus, Veldius, Suyskenius, Perierius, and Cleus. |
| Oct. | 5. | 1765-1786 | Stiltingus, Suyskenius, Perierius Byeus, Buæus, Ghesquierus, Hubenus, and Fronsonus. |

Antwerp was the scene of the labours of the Bollandists. They were engaged on them, when the enemies of every thing sacred arrived there under Pichegrû. The most eminent of the Bollandists was Father Papebrooch, a rival of the Petaviuses, the Sirmonds, and Mabillons; one of those men who exalt the character of the society to which they belong, and the age in which they live. The Spanish inquisition condemned some of the volumes in which he was concerned, but afterwards retracted the censure. Several dissertations, replete with various and profound erudition, are interspersed in the body of the work; they are equally distinguished by the learning and the soundness and sobriety of criticism which appear in them. It would be an irreparable loss to the Christian world, that the work should not be completed. The principal dissertations have been printed, in three volumes folio, at Venice, in 1749-1759. Those who wish to see an account of the controversy which produced or was occasioned by the sentence of the inquisition, may consult the *Acta Eruditorum* 1696, p. 132-500.

IX. 8. Another source of information, of which our Author availed himself, in the composition of his work, was *the Acts of the Beatification and Canonization of the Saints*.

The name of *Martyr* was given by the ancient church to those who had suffered death for the faith of Christ: the name of *Confessor* was applied to those who had made a public profession of their faith before the persecutors. It was afterwards extended to those who had edified the church by their heroic virtues. St Martin of Tours is generally supposed to have been the first

saint, to whom the title of Confessor was applied in the last sense.

Originally, every bishop had the privilege of *canonizing* saints, or declaring them entitled to the honours which the Catholic church bestows on her saints. The council of Cologne, cited by Ivo of Chartres, forbids the faithful to shew any public mark of veneration to any modern saint, without the permission of the diocesan. A capitulary of Charlemagne in 801 is to the same effect.

Pope Alexander III. is supposed to have been the first Pope who reserved the exclusive privilege of canonizing saints to the holy See. It was recognized by the church of France at a council at Vienne, in which the bishops, addressing themselves to Pope Gregory IX., expressly say, "that no sanctity, however "eminent, authorises the faithful to honour the memory of a "saint, without the permission of the holy See."

The present mode of proceeding in the canonization of saints, principally takes its rise from the decree of Pope Urban VIII., dated the 13th of March 1625. By that, he forbade the public veneration of every new saint, not beatified or canonized; and particularly ordered, that no one, even in private, should paint the image of any person, whatever might be his reputation for sanctity, with a crown or circle of light round his head; or expose his picture in any sacred place, or publish an history of his life, or a relation of his virtues and miracles, without the approbation of his diocesan: That if, in a work so approved of, the person were called saint, or blessed, those words should only be used to denote the general holiness of his life, but not to anticipate the general judgment of the church. His Holiness adds a form of protestation to that effect, which he requires the authors to sign, at the beginning and end of their works. This regulation of Pope Urban is so strictly attended to, that a single proof of the infraction of it, and even the omission of a definite sentence that there has been no infraction of it, makes the canonization of the saint impossible, and invalidates the whole of the proceedings. The only exception is, in favour of those saints who are proved to have been immemorially venerated for 100

years and upwards, before 1634, the year in which Pope Urban's bull was confirmed.

The beatification of a saint is generally considered as a preliminary to his canonization. It is a kind of provisional permission, authorising the faithful to honour the memory of the person beatified; but qualified as to the place or manner. A decree of Pope Alexander VIII., in 1659, prohibits the faithful from carrying those honours further than the bull of beatification expressly permits.

The proceedings of a beatification or canonization, are long, rigorous, and expensive:—*1st*, The bishop of the diocese institutes a process, in the nature of an information, to enquire into the public belief of the virtues and miracles of the proposed, and to ascertain, that the decree we have mentioned, of Pope Urban VIII. has been compiled with: this proceeding begins and ends with the bishop, his sentence being conclusive: *2dly*, The acts of this proceeding, with the bishop's sentence, are sealed up; then taken to the congregation of rites, and deposited with the notary: *3dly*, The solicitors for the congregation petition for publication of the proceedings: *4thly*, this is granted; and the proceedings, being first legally verified, are opened before the cardinal-president of the congregation: *5thly*, The Pope is then requested to refer the business to a particular cardinal to report upon it: *6thly*, This being granted, the writings of the proposed, if he be the author of any, are laid before the cardinal-reporter: *7thly*, He appoints a commission to assist him, and, with their assistance, makes his report. If one formal error against faith, one direct opinion contrary to morals, be found in them, it puts a total end to the proceedings, unless the author, in his life, expressly retracted it: "A general protestation," says Benedict XIV. "the most sincere submission of all his opi-"nions to the authority of the catholic church, saves the author "from criminality, but does not prevent the effect of this rigo-"rous exclusion." *8thly*, Hitherto the proceedings are not in strictness before the Pope; but, from this stage of the business, the affair wholly devolves on his Holiness. He signs a commission to the congregation of rites to institute and prosecute the process of beatification; but, before this commission is granted,

10 years must have expired, from the time when the acts of the diocesan were first lodged with the congregation of rites: 9*thly*, The congregation of rites appoints commissaries, whom the Pope delegates to inform themselves of the virtues and miracles of the proposed. The commissaries usually are bishops, and the bishop of the diocese, where the proposed is buried, is usually one of them; but laymen are never employed. The proceedings of the commissaries are secret, and carried on and subscribed with the strictest order and regularity, and in great form: the last step in their proceedings is to visit the tomb of the deceased, and to draw out a verbal process of the state in which his remains are found. The original of the proceedings is left with the bishops; a legalized copy is taken of them, and returned by a sworn courier to the congregation of rites. 10*thly*, The solicitors for the congregation then pray for what is called a decree of attribution, or that an enquiry may be made into each particular virtue and miracle attributed to the proposed: 11*thly*, Upon this, they proceed to make the enquiry, beginning with the virtues and ending with the miracles; but, of the former, they can take no notice in this stage of the business, till 50 years from the time of the proposed's decease: in the case of a martyr, his martyrdom alone, with proof both of the heroism with which it was suffered, and of its having been suffered purely and absolutely in the cause of Christ, is supposed to make an enquiry into his virtues unnecessary. 12*thly*, The final determination of the cause is settled in three extraordinary congregations, called the antepreparatory, the preparatory, and the general. The virtues to be approved of must be of the most heroic kind; the number of miracles is, in strictness, limited to two. The Pope collects the votes of the assembly; and two-thirds of it, at least, must agree in opinion, before they come to a resolution. He then pronounces what is called a private sentence before the promoter and the secretary of the congregation of St Peter. 13*thly*, A general congregation is then held, to determine whether it be advisable to proceed to the beatification of the proposed: 14*thly*, Three consistories are afterwards held: 15*thly*, The Pope then signs the brief of beatification. The publication of it is performed in the church of the Vatican. The solicitor for the beatifi-

cation presents the brief to the cardinal-prefect; he remits it to the cardinal-archpriest of the church where the ceremony is held. The cardinal-archpriest reads it aloud; the Te Deum is sung; a collect in honour of the beatified is read, and mass is solemnized in his honour. 16*thly*, When the proceedings for the beatification are completed, the proceedings for the canonization begin. But it is necessary, that, before any thing be done in them, new miracles should be wrought. When the solicitor for the canonization is satisfied that he can prove by judicial evidence the existence of these miracles, he presents a petition for resuming the cause. 17*thly*, Three congregations extraordinary, a general assembly, and three consistories, are held for the purpose of pronouncing on the new miracles, and determining whether it be prudent to proceed to canonization: 18*thly*, This being determined upon, the Pope issues the brief of canonization, and, soon after, the ceremonial follows. It begins by a solemn procession; an image of the saint is painted on several banners. When the procession arrives at the church, where the ceremony is performed, the Pope seats himself on his throne, and receives the usual homage of the court. The solicitor for the cause and the consistorial advocate place themselves at the feet of his Holiness, and request the canonization; the litanies are sung; the request is made a second time; the *Veni Creator* is sung; the request is made a third time; the secretary announces, that it is the will of the Pope to proceed immediately upon the canonization; the solicitor requests that the letters of canonization may be delivered in due form; his Holiness delivers them, and the first prothonotary calls on all the assembly to witness the delivery. The *Te Deum* is sung, and high mass is solemnized.

The decree of canonization is usually worded in these terms: "To the glory of the Holy Trinity, for the exaltation of the "Catholic faith, and the increase of the Christian religion: in "virtue of the authority of Jesus Christ, of the holy apostles "St Peter and St Paul, and our own, after due deliberation and "frequent invocations of the heavenly light, with consent of our "venerable brethren, the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and "bishops, present at Rome, we declare the blessed N— to be a "saint, and we inscribe him, as such, in the catalogue of the

" saints. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. " Amen."

Such is the outline of the process of canonization. It must be added, that the strictest evidence is required of every thing offered in proof. It is laid down as an universal rule, which admits of no exception, that the same evidence shall be required through the whole of the process, as in criminal cases is required to convict an offender of a capital crime; and that no evidence of any fact shall be received, if a higher degree of evidence of the same fact can possibly be obtained. Hence a copy of no instrument is admitted, if the original be in existence; no hearsay witness is received, if ocular testimony can be produced. The rigorous examination of every circumstance offered to be proved has excited the surprise of intelligent Protestants. Miracles, which to them seemed proved to the utmost degree of demonstration, have, to their surprise, been rejected. Whatever there is most aweful in religion, most sacred in an oath, or most tremendous in the censures of the church, is employed in the process of canonization to elicit truth and detect falsehood. Every check and countercheck is used which slowness of proceeding, or a repetition of it in other stages, and under different forms, can effect. The persons employed in it are the members of the Roman Catholic church, the most exalted by their rank, and the most renowned for their virtues and talents. When the proceedings are concluded, they are printed and exposed to the examination of the whole world. The sixth volume of the celebrated treatise of Benedict XIV. on the Beatification and Canonization of Saints, contains the Acts of the Saints canonized by himself.

## X.

With these helps our Author sat down to his work. We may suppose him addressing to the saints, whose lives he was about to write, a prayer similar to the beautiful prayer addressed to them by Bollandus at the end of his general preface, and which may be thus abridged: " Hail, ye citizens of heaven! courage-" ous warriors! triumphant over the world! From the blessed " scenes of your everlasting glory, look on a low mortal, who

" searches every where for the memorials of your virtues and " triumphs. Shew your favour to him; give him to discover " the valuable monuments of former times; to distinguish the " spurious from the legitimate; to digest his work in proper or- " der and method; to explain and illustrate whatever is obscure. " Take under your protection all who have patronized or assist- " ed him in his undertakings; obtain for all who read his work, " that they imitate the examples of virtue which it places before " their eyes; and that they experience how sweet, how useful, " and how glorious it is to walk in your steps."

In the preface to the French translation, the work is said to have cost our Author the labour of 30 years. It was his practice, when he began to write the life of any saint, to read over and digest the whole of his materials, before he committed any thing to paper. His work evidently shews, that his mind was full of its subject; and that what he wrote was the result of much previous information and reflection. On many occasions he must have written on subjects which were new to him; but, such is the mutual connection and dependence on every branch of literature, that a mind stored like his, was already in possession of that kind of knowledge, which would make him apprehend, with great ease, whatever he had to learn; and would instruct him, though the subject were new to him, where he might express himself decisively, and where he should doubt. How extensive and profound his general knowledge was, appears from this, that a person who happens to have made any subject, treated of by him, his particular study, will seldom read of what our Author has written upon it, without finding in it something original, or, at least, so happily expressed or illustrated, as to have the merit of originality. In some instances, as in his account of the Manichæans, in the life of St Augustine, and of the crusades, in the life of St Lewis, he shews such extent and minuteness of investigation, as could only be required from works confined to those subjects. In other instances, where his materials are scanty, so that he writes chiefly from his own mind, as in the lives of St Zita or St Isidore of Pelusium, he pours an unpremeditated stream of piety, which nothing but an intimate acquaintance with the best spiritual writers could produce.

The sameness of a great number of the most edifying actions which our Author had to relate, made it difficult for him to avoid a tiresome uniformity of narrative: but he has happily surmounted this difficulty. Another difficulty he met with, was the flat and inanimate style of the generality of the writers from whom his work was composed. Happy must he have been, when the authors he had to consult were St Jerome, Scipio Maffei, Bouhours, or Marsollier. But most commonly they were such as might edify, but could not delight. He had then to trust to his own resources, for that style, that arrangement, those reflections, which were to engage his reader's attention. In this he has certainly succeeded. Few authors, on holy subjects, have possessed, in an higher degree, that indescribable charm of style which rivets the reader's attention to the book, which never places the writer between the book and the reader, but insensibly leads him to the conclusion, sometimes delighted, but always attentive and always pleased.

His style is peculiar to himself; it partakes more of the style of the writers of the last century, than of the style of the present age. It possesses great merit, but sometimes is negligent and loose. Mr Gibbon mentioned it to the editor in warm terms of commendation; and was astonished when he heard how much of our Author's life had been spent abroad. Speaking of our Author's Lives of the Saints (vol. iv. 457), he calls it "a work of "merit,—the sense and learning belong to the author,—his pre-"judices are those of his profession." As it is known what prejudice means, in Mr Gibbon's vocabulary, our Author's relatives accept the character.

Having lived so long in the schools, he must have had a strong predilection for some of the opinions agitated in them; and frequent opportunities of expressing it occurred in his work. He seems to have cautiously avoided them: a single instance, perhaps, is not to be found, where any thing of the kind is discoverable in any of his writings. He has carefully brought before the reader every circumstance arising from his subject, that could be offered in proof or illustration of the particular tenets of the Roman Catholic Church; but he does it without affectation, and rather leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions, than sug-

gests them to him. Those expressions which good manners and good taste reject, are never to be found in his works.

But the chief merit of his works is, that they make virtue and devotion amiable: he preaches penance, but he shews its rewards; he exhorts to compunction, but he shews the sweetness of pious sorrow; he enforces humility, but shews the blessedness of an humble heart; he recommends solitude, but he shews that God *is*, where the world is not. No one reads his work who does not perceive the happiness, even in this world, of a holy life, or who does not wish to die the death of a saint. Most readers of it will acknowledge, that sometimes, at least, when they have read it, every worldly emotion has died within them, and they have felt themselves in a disposition of mind suited to receive the finest impressions of religion.

At the finishing of his work he gave a very edifying instance of humility. The manuscript of the first volume having been submitted to Mr Challoner, the vicar-apostolic of the London district, he recommended the omission of all the notes, not excepting that beautiful note which gives an account of the writings of St John Chrysostom. His motive was, that, by being made less bulky, the work might be made less expensive, and consequently more generally useful. It is easy to suppose what it must have cost our Author to consign to oblivion the fruit of so much labour and so many vigils. He obeyed however, and to this circumstance it is owing, that, in the first edition, the notes in question were omitted.

## XI.

XI. 1. It has been *objected* to our Author's work on the Lives of the Saints, *that the system of devotion which is recommended by it, is at best, suited to the cloister*. But no work has ever appeared, in which the difference between the duties of a man of the world and the duties of a religious, is more strongly pointed out. Whenever the Author has occasion to mention any action of any saint, which is extraordinary or singular in its nature, he always observes, that it is of a kind rather to be admired than imitated.

XI. 2. It has been objected, *that the piety which it inculcates*

*is of the ascetic kind,* and that the spirit of penance, voluntary mortification, and contempt of the world, which it breathes every where, is neither required nor recommended by the gospel. But no difference can be found, betwen the spirit of piety inculcated by our Author, and that inculcated by the most approved authors of the Roman Catholic Church. Less of penance, of voluntary mortification, or of contempt of the world, is not recommended by Rodriguez, by Thomas of Kempis, by St Francis of Sales, by Bourdaloue, or Massillon, than is recommended by our Author. Speaking of those, "who confound nature with grace, and who look on "the cross of Jesus Christ as an object foreign to faith and piety;— "It was not thus," says Massillon, in his Sermon on the Incarnation, "it was not thus, that the apostles announced the gospel to "our ancestors. *The spirit of thegospel is a holy eagerness of "suffering, an incessant attention to mortify self-love, to do violence "to the will, to restrain the desires, to deprive the senses of useless "gratifications; this is the essence of christianity, the soul of piety.* "If you have not this spirit, you belong not, says the apostle, to "Jesus Christ; it is of no consequence that you are not of the "number of the impure or sacrilegious of whom the apostle speaks, "and who will not be admitted into the kingdom of Christ. You "are equally strangers to him; your sentiments are not his; "you still live according to nature; you belong not to the grace "of our Saviour; you will therefore perish, for it is on him a- "lone, says the apostle, that the Father has placed our salvation. "A complaint is sometimes made that we render piety disgusting "and impracticable, by prohibiting many pleasures which the "world authorizes. But, my brethren, what is it we tell you? "Allow yourselves all the pleasures which Christ would have al- "lowed himself; faith allows you no other: mix with your piety "all the gratifications which Jesus Christ would have mixed in "his; the gospel allows no greater indulgence.—O my God, "how the decisions of the world will one day be strangely re- "versed! when worldly probity and worldly regularity, which, "by a false appearance of virtue, give a deceitful confidence to so "many souls, will be placed by the side of the crucified Jesus, and "will be judged by that model! To be always renouncing your- "selves, rejecting what pleases, regulating the most innocent

" wishes of the heart by the rigorous rules of the spirit of the " gospel, is difficult, is a state of violence. But if the pleasures " of the senses leave the soul sorrowful, empty, and uneasy; the " rigours of the cross make her happy. Penance heals the wounds " made by herself; like the mysterious bush in the scripture, " while man sees only its thorns and briars, the glory of the Lord " is within it, and the soul that possesses him possesses all. Sweet " tears of penance! Divine secret of grace! O that you were " better known to the sinner."——" The pretended esprits forts," (says Bourdaloue, in his sermon on the scandal of the cross, and the humiliations of Jesus Christ, the noblest of all his sermons, in the opinion of the Cardinal de Maury), " do not relish the rigor- " ous doctrines announced by the Son of God in his gospel; self- " hatred, self-denial, severity to one's self. But, when Christ e- " stablished a religion for men, who were to acknowledge them- " selves sinners and criminals, ought he, as St Jerome asks, to " have published other laws? What is so proper for sin as pe- " nance? What is more of the nature of penance, than the sin- " ner's harshness and severity to himself? Is there any thing in " this contrary to reason? They are astonished at his ranking " poverty among the beatitudes; that he held up the cross as an " attraction to his disciples to follow him; that he declares a love " of contempt, was preferable to the honours of the world. In " all this I see the depth of his divine counsels."—Such is the language of Bourdaloue and Massillon preaching before a luxurious court, to the best informed and most polished audience in the christian world. It is apprehended that no other language is found in our Author's Lives of the Saints.

XI. 3. Some (but their number is small) have imputed to our Author *too much credulity respecting miracles*. A chain of Agiographists might be supposed:—on the first link of it we might place Surius, as possessing the utmost degree of the belief of miracles consistent with any degree of judgment; on the last, we might place Baillet and Launoy, as possessing the utmost degree of the belief of miracles, consistent with any degree of deference to the general opinions of pious Catholics. Between them we might place in succession, according to their respective degrees of supposed belief, Ribadeneira, Baronius, the Bollan-

dists, Tillemont and Fleury. With which of these writers shall we class our Author? Certainly neither with Surius, nor with Baillet or Launoy. The middle links represent those, to whom the most liberal Roman Catholic will not impute too much credulity, or the most credulous too much freedom. Perhaps our Author should rank with the Bollandists, the first of this middle class; and generally he who thinks with Father Papebrooch, on any subject of ecclesiastical literature, may be sure of thinking right. To those who wholly deny the existence of miracles, these sheets are not addressed: But the Roman Catholic may be asked on what principle he admits the evidence for the miracles of the three first centuries, and rejects the evidence for the miracles of the middle age? why he denies to St Austin, St Gregory, the venerable Bede, or St Bernard, the confidence he places in St Justin, St Iræneus, or Eusebius?

## XII.

SOME years after our Author had published the Lives of the Saints, he published *the Life of Mary of the Cross*, a nun in the English convent of the Poor Clares at Rouen. It is rather a vehicle to convey instruction on various important duties of a religious life, and on sublime prayer, than a minute account of the life and actions of the Nun. It was objected to this work, as it had been to the Saints Lives, that it inculcated a spirit of mystic prayer, the excesses of which had been formally condemned, and the propriety of which, even in a very qualified view of it, was doubtful.

It must be admitted, by those who urge this objection, that, both in the Saints Lives and in the work of which we are speaking, our Author uses very guarded expressions. He always takes care to mention, that, in the practices of devotion, as in every other practice, the common is the safest road: that many of the greatest saints have, through the whole of their lives, confined themselves to the usual modes of prayer and meditation; that the gift of contemplation is given to few; that, like every other practice of devotion, contemplation has its dangers; and that, without a perfect spirit of humility, it is much exposed to illusion: but he delivers at the same time an explicit opinion,

that contemplation is a gift of heaven; that the happiness of a soul on whom God bestows it, is above description; and that every joy which this life affords, is contemptible in comparison of it. This certainly is catholic doctrine.

It is natural to suppose, that, at a time when every art and science was deluged in a quantity of barbarous words, and metaphysics were carried into every subject, the doctrine of prayer would often be involved in similar intricacies and refinements. The fact certainly is, that many writers of the middle age, on the subject of prayer, introduced into their writings a wonderful degree of metaphysical subtlety. But, if their doctrine be divested of those subtleties, and expressed in plain language, it will be found that nothing in what our Author, with other spiritualists, call Mystical Theology, contradicts common sense. With them, he divides the progress of a Christian, in his advances towards perfection, into three stages,—the purgative, the contemplative, and the unitive. In the first stage he places sinners on their first entrance after their conversion into a spiritual life; who bewail their sins, are careful to avoid relapsing into them, endeavour to destroy their bad habits, to extinguish their passions; who fast, watch, pray, chastise the flesh, mourn, and are blessed with a contrite and humbled heart. In the second stage he places those, who divest themselves of earthly affections, study to acquire purity of heart, and a constant habit of virtue, the true light of the soul; who meditate incessantly on the virtues and doctrines of Christ, and thereby inflame themselves to the imitation of him. Those he supposes to be arrived at the third stage, whose souls, being thus illuminated, are united to God and enjoy his peace, which passeth understanding. According to our Author, the prayer of a person, who is arrived at the last stage, is very different from that of a beginner in spiritual life. To present a pious subject to his mind, to place it in the various points of view in which it should be considered, to raise the devout sentiments which the consideration of it should produce, and to form the resolutions which those sentiments should inspire, must, our Author observes, be a work of exertion to a beginner. But, when once he has arrived at that state of perfection, as to have detached himself from those objects which are

the usual incitements to sin, and to which, from the natural propensity of the human heart, the imaginations of man forcibly lead, and when an ardent love of virtue, piety, and whatever relates to them, is habitual in her;—then our Author supposes that what before was exertion, becomes the usual state of the soul; a thousand causes of distraction cease to exist, and all the powers of the mind and affections of the heart rest with ease and pleasure on the subject of her meditation: God communicates to her his perfections; he enlightens her in the mysteries of religion, and raises in her admirable sentiments of wonder and love. This our Author calls the prayer of contemplation. In process of time, he supposes that the habit of devotion increases; that the soul acquires a stronger aversion from every thing that withholds her from God, and a more ardent desire of being united to Him; and that, by continually meditating on the sublime truths and mysteries of christianity, she is disengaged from earthly affections, is always turned to God, and obtains a clearer view of his perfections, of her obligations to him, and of the motives which entitle Him to her love. Then, according to our Author, every thing, which is not God, becomes irksome to her, and she is united to Him in every action, and every thought. At first the soul, by our Author's description, calls to her mind the presence of God; afterwards she habitually recollects it; at length every thing else disappears, and she lives in him. Even in the first stage, when the sinner first turns from vice, and determinately engages in the practice of a virtuous life, our Author pronounces that the comforts which she experiences in reflecting on the happiness of the change, exceed the joys of this world: he supposes her to to say, in the words of Bourdaloue, (*sur la choix mutuel de Dieu et de l' ame religieuse*) "I have chosen God, and God has chosen "me; this reflection is my support and my strength, it will en- "able me to surmount every difficulty, to resist every tempta- "tion, to rise above every chagrin and every disgust." From the moment this choice is made, he supposes, with the same eloquent preacher, (in his sermon for the feast of Saint Mary Magdalen), "that the soul, exposed till then to all the vexations "which the love of the world inevitably occasions, begins to en- "joy a sweet tranquillity: conscience begins to experience the

" interior joy of pious hope and confidence in the mercies of God, " and to feel the holy unction of grace; in the midst of her peni- " tential austerities she comforts and strengthens herself by the " thought that she is making some satisfaction and atonement to " God for her sins, that she is purifying her heart, and disposing " it to receive the communications of heaven." This comfort and sensation of happiness, he observes, must necessarily increase as the charms of virtue are unveiled to the soul, and she acquires a continual habit of thinking on God. " Who can express," he makes the soul exclaim with the same author, " the secret de- " lights which God bestows on a heart thus purified and pre- " pared! how he enlightens her! how he inflames her with di- " vine love! with what visitations he favours her! what holy " sentiments and transports he excites in her!" But, when she lives for God alone, then, in our Author's language, God communicates himself with her, and her happiness, as far as happiness is attainable in this life, is complete. Here, according to Thomas of Kempis, (and what Catholic refuses his authority?), begins the *Familiaritas stupenda nimis*. " What is the hundred- " fold of reward," cries Bourdaloue, (*sermon sur le renoncement religieuse*), " that Thou, O God, hast promised to the soul which " has left every thing for thee? It is something more than I " have said upon it: it is something that I cannot express: but " it is something with which, sinful and weak as I am, God has " more than once favoured me."—" Thou promisedst me a " hundred-fold," says St Bernard, " I feel it; thou hast more " than performed thy promise." *Necessitas quod cogit, defendit.* In defence of our Author, this short exposition of his doctrine seemed necessary: and it may be confidently asked, in what it differs from the doctrine of Rodriguez, of St Francis de Sales, of Bourdaloue, or of many other authors, in whom the universal opinion of the catholic world recognises, not only true devotion and piety, but extreme good sense and moderation. Nor should it be forgotten, that, if the prelates assembled at Issy in 1695, declared, (Art. 22.) " that, without any extraordinary degrees " of prayer, a person may become a very great saint;"—they had previously declared, (Art. 21.), " that, even those which " are passive, and approved of by St Francis of Sales and other

" spiritualists, cannot be rejected." The authors on these subjects, whom our Author particularly recommended, were Balthazar Alvarez de Paz and St Jure. The latter was one of the Jesuits who came into England during the reign of Charles the First. His most celebrated work is, a treatise on the Knowledge and Love of God, in five volumes,—a noble effusion of the sublimest piety. The only work by which he is known in this country, is, his Life of the Baron de Renty: Our author esteemed it much, but thought it censurable for mentioning, in terms of commendation, the mode in which the Baron, to save his honour, indirectly put himself in the way of fighting a duel.

Another spiritualist, whom our Author greatly admired, was the celebrated Henry Marie de Boudon. He frequently mentioned, in terms of the highest admiration, the humility and resignation with which Boudon bore the calumnies of his prelate and fellow-clergy. He often related that part of his life, when, being abandoned by the whole world, a poor convent of religious received him into their house, and he knelt down to thank God, that one human being still existed, who was kindly disposed to him. His writings are numerous; the style of them is not elegant, and they abound with low expressions; but they contain many passages of original and sublime eloquence. Our Author was also a great admirer of the works of Father Surin, particularly his *Fondemens de la Vie spirituelle*, edited by Father Bignon. In this species of writing, few works perhaps will give the reader so much pleasure as the *Morale de l' Evangile*, in 4 vols. 8vo. by Father Neuvile, brother to the celebrated preacher of that name. It is to be hoped that it will be translated into English *. Our

* For this and many other valuable works we naturally look to Stoneyhurst. If the Musæ exulantes *, in the swamps of Bruges, could produce an elegant and nervous translation of Cato, will their notes be less strong or less sweet in their native land? May we not expect from Stoneyhurst other Petaviuses, other Sirmonds, other Porées, future Strachans, future Stanleys, future Heskeys, future Stricklands. If any of them would favour us with a translation of Father Montreuil's *Vie de Jesus Christ*, he would supply the English Catholic with the present desideratum of his library, an interesting and accurate life of Christ. A literary history of the Gospels, shewing the state of the text, and the grammatical peculiarities of their idiom, and containing a short account of the early versions, would be an

* The title assumed by them, in the preface to the Latin translation of Cato.

Author greatly lamented the consequences of the altercation between Fenelon and Bossuet. He thought the condemnation which had been past in it, on the abuses of devotion, had brought de-

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an invaluable work. The excellent translation by Mr Combes, the professor of divinity in St Edmund's College, of selected parts of St Basil and St John Chrysostom, shews his ability to execute such a work, and leads us to hope it for him. The mention of these gentlemen, naturally makes us reflect on the singular kindness shewn by this country to the foreign exiles. The Editor begs leave to copy what has been said by him on this subject in a small work, entitled *Hora Biblicæ*. After mentioning some of the most splendid of the biblical exertions of the English, the compiler of that work says,—"Yet, useful and magnificent as these exertions have been, an edition of the New Testament has lately appeared in this country, which, in one point of view, eclipses them all. It has been our lot to be witnesses of the most tremendous revolution that christian Europe has known: a new race of enemies to the christian religion has arisen, and from Rome to Hungary, has struck at every altar, and shaken every throne. One of their first enormities was, the murder of a large proportion of their clergy, and the banishment of almost the whole of the remaining part. Some thousands of those respectable exiles found refuge in England. A private subscription of £33,775: 15: 9½ was immediately made for them. When it was exhausted, a second was collected, under the auspices of his Majesty, and produced £41,304: 12: 6¾. Nor is it too much to say, that the beneficence of individuals, whose charities on this occasion are known to God alone, raised for the sufferers a sum much exceeding the amount of the larger of the two subscriptions. When at length the wants of the sufferers exceeded the measure of private charity, Government took them under its protection, and, though engaged in a war, exceeding all former wars in expence, appropriated, with the approbation of the whole kingdom, a monthly allowance of about £8000 for their support; an instance of splendid munificence and systematic liberality, of which the annals of the world do not furnish another example. The management of the contribution was entrusted to a committee of whom Mr Wilmot, then one of the members of Parliament for the city of Coventry, was president: on him the burden of the trust almost wholly fell; and his humanity, judgment, and perseverance, in the discharge of it, did honour to himself and his country.

"It should be observed, that the contributions we have mentioned are exclusive of those which were granted for the relief of the lay emigrants.

"So suddenly had the unhappy sufferers been driven from their country, that few of them had brought with them any of those books of religion or devotion, which their clerical character and habits of prayer had made the companions of their past life, and which were to become almost the chief comfort of their future years. To relieve them from this misfortune, the university of Oxford, at her sole expence, printed for them at the Clarendon Press, two thousand copies of the Latin Vulgate of the New Testament, from an edition of Barbou; but this number not being deemed sufficient to satisfy the demand, two thousand more

votion itself into discredit, and thrown a ridicule on the holiness of an interior life. Of Fenelon he always spoke with the highest respect. One of the editors of the last edition of his works is now in England: he has declared that it appeared from Fenelon's papers, that his exertions to the very last, to ward off the sentence of the condemnation of his works, were most active. This enhanced the value of his sacrifice. Our Author thought that Valart had abundantly proved that Thomas of Kempis was not the author of the Imitation of Christ; but that he had not proved it to be written by Gersen, the abbot of Vercelli: he also differed from Valart in his opinion of the general merit of the works of Thomas of Kempis; his treatises *de tribus tabernaculis* and *de vera compunctione*, (the latter particularly) he thought excellent *.

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" more copies were added, at the expence of the Marquis of Buckingham. Few " will forget the piety, the blameless demeanour, the long patient suffering of these " respectable men. Thrown on a sudden into a foreign country, differing from " theirs in religion, language, manners, and habits, the uniform tenor of their pious " and unoffending lives, procured them universal respect and good will. The " country that received them, has been favoured. In the midst of the public and " private calamity, which almost every nation has experienced, Providence has " crowned *her* with glory and honour; peace has dwelt in her palaces, plenty with- " in her walls; every climate has been tributary to her commerce, every sea has " been witness of her victories."

* Our Author was a great admirer of the writings of Abraham Woodhead; he purchased his manuscripts, and, by his will, bequeathed them to the English College at Douay. Mr Woodhead is one of the writers to whom the celebrated *Whole Duty of Man* has been attributed. On that subject the editor is in possession of the following note in our Author's hand-writing.—" Mr Simon Berrington, " who died in 1758, endeavoured to give Mr Woodhead the honour of being the " author of the Whole Duty of Man, and other works of the same kind, but there " is a difference of style between them; there occurring in the Whole Duty of " Man, and the other works of that author, scarce any parentheses, with which all " Mr Woodhead's works abound. Nevertheless, certain it is, that Dr John Fell, " Dean of Christ Church, (afterwards bishop of Oxford), who published the other " works of the author of the Whole Duty of Man, namely, the Ladies Calling, the " Art of Contentment, the Government of the Tongue; the Lively Oracles given " unto us, &c. in folio at Oxford in 1675-1678, and wrote the preface which he " prefixed to this edition, and who was the only person then living who knew the " author of the Whole Duty of Man, gave this book of the Whole Duty of Man to " his bookbinder and Hawkins his bookseller in London, with other pieces of Mr " Woodhead's

## XIII.

SOME time after our Author's return to England, from his travels with Mr Edward Howard, he was chosen President of the English College at St Omers. That college was originally founded by the English Jesuits On the expulsion of the Society from France, the English Jesuits shared the fate of their brethren.

On his being named to the presidency of the English College at St Omers, doubts were suggested to him, on the justice or propriety of his accepting the presidency of a college, which in fact belonged to others. He advised with the bishop of Amiens and the bishop of Bologne upon this point, and they both agreed in opinion, that he might safely accept it.

He continued president of the college of St Omers till his decease. It was expected by his friends, that his office of president would leave him much time for his studies; but these expectations wholly failed. He was immediately appointed vicar-general to the bishops of Arras, St Omers, Ipres, and Bologne. This involved him in an immensity of business; and, his reputation continually increasing, he was consulted from every part of France on affairs of the highest moment. The consequence was, that, contrary to the wishes and expectations of his friends, he never was so little master of his time, as he was during his residence at St Omers. The editor has been favoured with the following letter, which will shew the esteem in which our Author was held, by those who, at the time we speak of, lived in habits of intimacy with him.

" You have occasioned me, Sir, to experience a heartfelt satis-
" faction in allowing me an intercourse with you on the subject
" of the late Mr Butler your uncle, and to communicate to you
" the particulars within my knowledge, concerning the life, the
" eminent virtues and uncommon abilities of that celebrated gen-

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" Woodhead's, and ordered Mr Woodhead's name to be added to the title of this
" as well as of the other works which he gave to be bound.—If Mr Woodhead
" wrote that celebrated work, it was before he travelled abroad, or had any thoughts
" of embracing the catholic faith." The same anecdote was mentioned to the editor by the late Mr Challoner.

" tleman. Never was I acquainted with any of my contempora-
" ries who was at once so learned, so pious, so gentle, so modest;
" and whatever high opinion might be conceived of him, from a
" perusal of his immortal work on the Lives of Saints; that mas-
" ter-piece of the most extensive erudition, of the most enlighten-
" ed criticism, and of that unction which commands the affections;
" such an opinion is greatly inferior to the admiration which he
" inspired to those persons, who, like myself, had the happiness to
" live in intimate connection with him. The paternal kindness,
" and, I am bold to say it, the tender friendship, with which he
" honoured my youth, have indelibly engraved on my heart the
" facts I am about to relate to you with the most scrupulous ex-
" actness. Monsieur de Conziê, now bishop of Arras, having
" been raised to the see of St Omers in 1766, caused me to be e-
" lected a canon in his cathedral church; he nominated me one of
" his vicars-general, and I repaired thither on the 5th of October
" 1767.

" That prelate, whose high reputation dispenses with my en-
" comiums, mentioned your uncle to me, on the very day of my
" arrival. " I am here possessed," said he, " of a hidden trea-
" sure; and that is Mr Butler the president of the English col-
" lege. I for the first time saw him," added he, " during the
" ceremony of my installation. He was kneeling on the pavement
" in the midst of the crowd, his countenance and deportment had
" something heavenly in them: I enquired who he was; and up-
" on his being named to me, I caused him, though reluctant, to be
" conducted to one of the first stalls in the choir. I will entreat
" him," said moreover the prelate, " to favour you with his
" friendship; he shall be your counsel, you cannot have a better."
" I made answer, that Monsieur de Beaumont, the illustrious arch-
" bishop of Paris, in whose palace I had enjoyed the invaluable
" benefit of passing two years, had often spoken of him to me
" in the most honourable terms; that he had commissioned me,
" at my departure, to renew to him the assurance of his particu-
" lar esteem; and that I would neglect nothing to be thought
" worthy of his benevolence.

" I was so happy as to succeed in it within a short time. His
" lordship the bishop condescended to wish me joy of it, and en-

" trusted me with the design he had formed, of honouring the " assembly of his vicars-general by making him our colleague. " I was present when he delivered to him his credentials; which " moment will never forsake my remembrance. I beheld your " dear uncle suddenly casting himself at the prelate's knees, and " beseeching him with tears in his eyes, not to lay that burden up- " on him. *Ah! my Lord*, said he, to him, *I am unable to fill so* " *important a place*; nor did he yield but upon an express com- " mand: *Since you require it shall be so*, said he. *I will obey*; *that* " *is the first of my duties.* What an abundant source of reflec- " tion was this for me, who was then about twenty-six years of " age. It was then especially that I resolved to make up for my " inexperience, by taking him for my guide who had been giving " me that great example of christian humility.

" The bishop had already shewn him his confidence, by pla- " cing his own nephew in the English college, as also that of the " bishop of Senlis, his friend and the son of one of his country men. " I had the charge of visiting them frequently. I used to send " for them, to dine with me on every school-holiday. If one of " them had been guilty of a fault, the punishment I inflicted was, " that he should desire Mr Butler to keep him at home. But it " almost always proved useless; he would himself bring me the " delinquent, and earnestly solicit his pardon; *Depend upon it*, " said he to me one day, *he will behave better for the future.* I " asked him what proof he had of it. *Sir*, answered he, in the " presence of the lad, *he has told me so.* I could not forbear smil- " ing at such confidence in the promisses of a school-boy of ten " years old; but was not long before I repented. In a private " conversation he observed to me, that one of the most important " rules in education, is to impress children with a persuasion that " the vices we would keep them from, such as lying, and break- " ing one's word, are too shocking to be thought possible. A " maxim this, worthy of the great Fenelon his beloved moded, and " which common tutors do not so much as surmise.

" Those three youths, our common functions of vicars-general, " the delightful company of your uncle, and the frequent need I " had of drawing from that source of light, carried me almost e- " very day to the English college. I could delineate to you, Sir,

" his ordinary course of life in the inward administration of that " house; I could tell you of his assiduousness at all the exercises; " of his constant watchfulness; of the public and private exhor- " tations he made to his pupils, with that persuasive eloquence " we meet with in his writings; of his pious solicitude for all " their wants; and of their tender attachment to him. His room " was continually filled with them. He never put on the harsh and " threatening magisterial look: he was like a fond mother sur- " rounded by her children; or, he was rather, according to the " expression, * the eagle not disdaining to teach her young ones " to soar, and carrying them on her expanded wings, to save them " from a fatal fall. But I leave to his worthy co-operators the " satisfaction of detailing to you those particulars, which I only " transiently beheld, and which I never saw without being affect- " ed. How many interesting anecdotes will they have to acquaint " you with!

" Every instant that Mr Butler did not dedicate to the govern- " ment of his college he employed in study; and, when obliged " to go abroad, he would read as he walked along the streets. I " have met him with a book under each arm, and a third in his " hands, and have been told, that, travelling one day on horseback, " he fell a reading, giving the horse his full liberty. The crea- " ture used it to eat a few ears of corn that grew on the road side. " The owner came in haste, swearing he would be indemnified. " Mr Butler, who knew nothing of the damage done, no sooner " perceived it, than, blushing, he said to the countryman, with his " usual mildness, that his demand was just; he then draws out a " Louis d'or and gives it to the fellow, who would have been very " well satisfied with a few pence, makes repeated apologies to him, " easily obtains forgiveness, and goes on his way.

" Notwithstanding such constant application, the extensiveness " of his knowledge was next to a prodigy. Whenever I happen- " ed to consult him on any extraordinary question, upon which " the authors most familiar to us were silent, he would take me " to the library of the abbey of St Bertin, would ask for old wri-

* Sicut aquila provocans ad volandam pullos suos, et super eos volitans expandit alas suas.—Deutoron. cap. 22.

" ters, whose names I was scarce acquainted with, and point out " to me, even before I had opened them, the section and chapter " in which I should find my difficulty solved.

" Nor would I have you think, Sir, that the ecclesiastical " sciences were the only that he had applied to. A couple of " anecdotes I am going to relate, and which I could hardly have " believed, had I not been witness to them, will prove to you " that every kind of information was reunited in his intellect, " without the smallest confusion.

" Monsieur de Conziê, after his translation from the bisho- " pric of St Omers to that of Arras, invited him to come and " see him there. My brother vicars and myself sought one day " for a question which he would not be able to answer, and " thought we had found one. Accordingly we asked him, what " was the name of a Pear, called (in French) *bon Chretien*, before " the coming of Christ, and Christianity. *There are*, answered " he, *two systems on that point;* and then quotes us two mo- " dern naturalists, sets forth their opinions, and unfolds to us the " authorities with which they backed them. I had the curiosity " to ascertain one of those quotations, and found it accurate to a " title.

" A few days after, the bishop of Arras, having his drawing- " room filled with company, Mr President was announced; the " bystanders, thinking it to be the first president of the council " d'Artois, opened him a gangway to come at the prelate; they " behold a priest enter, whom, by his bashful and modest looks, " they take for some country curate, and by a simultaneous mo- " tion they close up the passage which they had made. The bi- " shop, who had already descried his dear president of the En- " glish college, perceived also the motion, and resolved to put " the authors of it to the blush. He observed in one corner of " the room a group of military men; he goes up to them, and " finding they were conversing upon the question keenly debated " at that time, whether in battle the *thin order*, observed in our " days, be preferable to the *deep* order of the ancients; he called " to Mr Butler and asked him, what he thought of it? I then " heard that amazing man talking on the art of war with the " modest tone of a school-boy, and the depth of the most con-

" summate military man. I observed admiration in the coun-
" tenance of all those officers; and saw several of them, who, be-
" ing too far off, stood up upon chairs to hear and see him.
" They altogether put to him questions upon questions, and
" each of his answers caused fresh applause.

" His lordship left us to go and join another group, consisting
" of magistrates, who were discussing a point of common law;
" and in like manner called upon his oracle, who, by the sagacity
" of his reflections, bore away all suffrages, and united their se-
" veral opinions.

" The prelate, next, taking him by the hand, presented him to
" the ladies, seated round the fire-place, and asked him, whether
" the women in ancient times wore their head-dresses as high as
" ours then did. *Fashions*, answered he, *like the spokes of a*
" *wheel turning on its axis, are always replaced by those very ones*
" *which they have set aside.* He then described to us the dresses,
" both of the men and women, in the various ages of our mo-
" narchy; *and, to go still further back*, added he, *the statue of a*
" *female Druid has been found, whose head-dress measured half*
" *a yard in height; I have been myself to see it, and have mea-*
" *sured it.*

" What astonished me most, was, that studies so foreign to
" the supernatural objects of piety, shed over his soul neither
" aridity nor lukewarmness. He referred all things to God,
" and his discourse always concluded by some christian re-
" flections, which he skilfully drew from the topic of the con-
" versation. His virtue was neither minute nor pusillanimous:
" religion had in his discourse, as well as in his conduct, that
" solemn gravity, which can alone make it worthy of the Su-
" preme Being. Ever composed, he feared neither contradic-
" tions nor adversities: he dreaded nothing but praises. He
" never allowed himself a word that could injure any one's re-
" putation: his noble generosity was such, that, as often as I
" happened to prize in his presence any one of his books, or of
" the things belonging to him, I the same day found them in
" my possession. In short, I will confess it, to my confusion,
" that for a long time I sought to discover a failing in him; and
" I protest, by all that is most sacred, that I never new one in
" him. These are the facts, Sir, you was desirous of knowing;

" in the relation of which I have used no exaggeration, nor have " had any thing to dissemble. I have often related these facts to " my wondering friends, as a relief to my heart; and indeed, " notwithstanding the distance of time, they recur as fresh to " my rememberance as if just transacted before my eyes.

" I was at a distance from St Omers when death robbed me " of my respectable friend. Time has not alleviated the sorrow " which the loss of him fixt deeply in my breast. I have pre- " ciously preserved some of his presents, and carefully concealed " them at my leaving France. May I one day find again those dear " pledges of a friendship, the recollection of which is in our ca- " lamities the sweetest of my consolations. I have the honour " to be, with the highest regard,

" SIR, Your most obedient, &c. &c.

" At the Hague, Dec. 30. 1794.

" L'Abbe de la SEPOUZE."

During Our Author's stay at St Omers, a thesis was printed and publicly defended, in a neighbouring university, which excited his attention. Mr Joseph Berington presided at the defensions of it. It certainly contained many propositions which were offensive to pious ears: but respectable persons are said to have declared, that it contained nothing materially contrary to the faith of the Roman Catholic Church; and the editor feels it a duty incumbent on him to add, that one of the bishops, to whom Our Author was grand vicar, mentioned to the editor, that he thought his vicar had shewn too much vivacity on that occasion.

## XIV.

BOTH from Our Author's letters, and from what is recollected of his conversations, it appears that he often explicitly declared, that, if powerful measures were not adopted to prevent it, *a Revolution in France* would take place, both in church and state. He thought irreligion, and a general corruption of manners, gained ground every where. On the decay of piety in France, he once mentioned in confidence to the editor, a circumstance so shocking, that, even after what has publicly happened, the editor does not think himself justifiable in mentioning it in this place. He seems to have augured well on the change of ministry which took place on the expulsion of the Choiseuls. He was particularly acquainted with the Cardinal de Bernis, and the Mareschal

de Muy. Of the latter he writes thus in one of his letters: "Mr de Muy, who has sometimes called upon me, and often "writes to me, as the most affectionate of friends, is unanimously "called the most virtuous and upright nobleman in the king-"dom. The late Dauphin's projects, in favour of religion, he "will endeavour to execute. He is minister of war. The "most heroic piety will be promoted by him by every method: "if I gave you an account of his life, you would be charmed by "so bright a virtue."

## XV.

Our Author had *projected many works* besides those which we have mentioned. Among them his treatise on the *Moveable Feasts* may be reckoned. He very much lamented that he had not time to complete it: what he had prepared of it, he thought too prolix, and, if he had lived to revise it, he would have made great alterations in it. Some time after his decease it was published under the inspection of Mr Challoner. He proposed writing the lives of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More, and had made great collections, with a view to such a work: some of them are in the hands of the editor, and are at the command of any person to whom they can be of use. He had begun a treatise to explain and establish the truths of *natural and revealed religion*; he was dissatisfied with what Bergier had published on those subjects. He composed many *sermons*, and an immense number of *pious discourses*. From what remained of the three last articles, *the three volumes of his discourses*, which have appeared since his decease, were collected. The editor is happy in this opportunity of mentioning his obligations to the reverend Mr Jones, for revising and superintending the publication of them. They are acknowledged to possess great merit; the morality of them is entitled to great praise; the discourse on conversation shews a considerable knowledge of life and manners. Having mentioned his sermons, it is propet to add, that as a preacher he almost wholly failed. His sermons were sometimes interesting and pathetic; but they were always desultory, and almost always immeasurably long. The editor has lately published his *Short Life of Sir Toby Matthews*.

He was very communicative of his manuscripts, and consequently many of them were lost; so that, on an attentive exa-

mination of them, after his decease, none but those we have mentioned were thought fit for the press.

## XVI.

THE number of *letters* written by Our Author exceeds belief; if they could be collected, they would be found to contain an immense mass of interesting matter, on many important topics of religion and literature. He corresponded with many persons of distinction both among the communicants with the see of Rome, and the separatists from her. Among the former may be reckoned the learned and elegant Lambertini, who afterwards, under the name of Benedict the 14th, was honoured with the papal crown: among the latter may be reckoned Dr Lowth, the bishop first of Oxford, afterwards of London, the celebrated translator of Isaiah. In a Latin note on Michaelis, Our Author speaks of that prelate as his intimate acquaintance, "*necessitate conjunctissimus.*"

He had the happiness to enjoy the friendship and esteem of many persons distinguished by rank, talents, or virtue. The holy bishop of Amiens spoke of him in the highest terms of admiration and regard. In the life written in French of that excellent prelate, he is mentioned "as the most learned man in Europe." He is styled by father Brotier, in his preface to his edition of Tacitus, "sacrâ eruditione perceleber." The late Mr Philips, in the preface to his life of Cardinal Pole, mentioning the edition of his letters by Cardinal Quirini, expresses himself thus:—"they "were procured for the Author by Mr Alban Butler, to whom the "public is indebted for the most useful and valuable work which "has appeared in the English language on the Lives of the Saints, "and which has been so much esteemed in France, that it is now "translating into the language of a country celebrated for biography, with large additions by the Author. This gentleman's readiness on all occasions to assist the Author in his undertaking, was "answerable to his extensive knowledge and general acquaintance "with whatever has any relation to erudition."—Our Author was not satisfied with the French translation of his work: the writers professed to translate it freely; but he thought that they abused the privilege of free translation, that they misrepresented his meaning, that their style was affected, and that the devotional cast which he had laboured to give the original, was wholly lost in their translation. The editor has heard that a translation of it was begun in the Spanish and Italian languages, but he has see

no such translation. Dr Kennicot spoke loudly of our Author's readiness and disinterested zeal to oblige. Even the stern Mr Hollis mentions him, in his memoirs, with some degree of kindness. No person was more warmly attached to his friends. With his affectionate and generous disposition, no one was more sensible of unkindness, than he was; but none forgave it more readily. It was his rule to cultivate those who were inimical to him, by every mark of attention and act of kindness; and rather to seek, than avoid an intercourse with them. His incessant attention to his studies frequently made him absent in society: this sometimes produced whimsical incidents.

Whatever delight he found in his literary pursuits, he never sacrificed his religious duties to them, or permitted them to trespass on *his exercises of devotion*. Huet, whom, for his resemblance to our Author in unremitted application to study, the editor has often had occasion to mention, laments his own contrary conduct in very feeling terms:—"I was entirely carried," says he, (*de rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, 174) "by the pleasure found "in learning: the endless variety which it affords had taken up "my thoughts, and seized all the avenues of my mind, that I was "altogether incapable of any sweet and intimate communication "with God. When I withdrew into religious retirement, in or-"der to recollect my scattered thoughts, and fix them on heav-"enly things, I experienced a dryness and insensibility of soul "by which the Holy Spirit seemed to punish this excessive bent "to learning." This misfortune our Author never experienced. A considerable portion of his time was devoted to prayer. When it was in his power, he said mass every day: when he travelled, he rose at a very early hour, that he might hear it; he never neglected the prayer of the *Angelus*, and, when he was not in the company of strangers, he said it on his knees. He recommended a frequent approach to the sacrament of the altar: some, under his spiritual direction, communicated almost every day. The *morâle sevére* of the Jansenists he strongly reprobated in discourse, and no person receded further from it in practice: but he was an admirer of the style of the gentlemen of Port Royal, and spoke with praise of their general practice of avoiding the insertion of the pronoun, *I*, in their writings. He thought the bible should not be read by very young persons, or by

those who were wholly uninformed: even the translation of the whole divine office of the church, he thought should not be given to the faithful, promiscuously. In the printed correspondence of Fenelon, a long letter by him on frequent communion, and one on reading the bible, (they deserve to be translated and generally read), express exactly our Author's sentiments on those subjects. All singularity in devotion was offensive to him. He exhorted every one to a perfect discharge of the ordinary duties of his situation, to a conformity to the divine will both in great and little occasions, to good temper and mildness in his intercourse with his neighbour, to an habitual recollection of the divine presence, to a scrupulous attachment to truth, to retirement, to extreme sobriety. These he used to say were the virtues of the primitive Christians, and among them, he said, we should always look for perfect models of christian virtue. Fleury's account of them, in his *Manners of the Christians*, he thought excellent, and frequently recommended the perusal of it. He exhorted all to devotion to the Mother of God; many, under his care, said her office every day. The advantage of mental prayer he warmly inculcated. In the conduct of souls he was all mildness and patience: motives of love were oftener in his mouth than motives of fear; "for to him that loves, "nothing," he used to say, with the author of the Imitation of Christ, "is difficult." He often sacrificed his studies and private devotions to the wants of his neighbour. When it was in his power he attended the ceremony of the *salût* at the parish church; and on festivals particularly solemnized by any community of the towns in which he resided, he usually assisted aa the divine service in their churches. He was very abstemious in his diet; and considered systematic sensuality as the ultimate degradation of human nature. He never was heard to express so much disgust, as at conversations where, for a great length of time, the pleasures of the table, or the comparative excellence of dishes, had been the sole topic of conversation; yet he was very far from being an enemy to rational mirth, and he always exerted himself to entertain and promote the pleasures of his friends. In all his proceedings he was most open and unreserved: from selfishness, none could be more free. Dr Kennicot often said, that, of the many he had employed in his great biblical undertaking, none had shown more activity, or more disinterestedness, than our Au-

thor. He was zealous in the cause of religion, but his zeal was without bitterness or animosity: polemic acrimony was unknown to him. He never forgot, that in every heretic he saw a brother Christian; in every infidel, he saw a brother man. He greatly admired *Drouen de Sacramentis*, and *Boranga's Theology*. *Tournely* he preferred much to his antagonist *Billouart*. He thought *Houbigant* too bold a critic, and objected some novelties to the *Hebraizing friars of the Rue St Honoré*. He believed the Letters of *Ganganelli*, with the exception of two or three at most, to be spurious. Their spuriousness has been since placed beyond controversy by the *Diatribe Clementine* published in 1777. *Caraccioli*, the editor of them, in his *remerciement a l'auteur de l'année Litteraire de la part de l'Editeur des Lettres au Pape Ganganelli*, acknowledges that he filled sixty pages at least of them, with thoughts and insertions of his own compositions. In the hand-writing of a gentleman remarkable for his great accuracy, the editor has before him the following account of our Author's sentiments on usury: "Mr Alban Butler's opinion "of receiving interest for money, in a letter dated 20th June "1735, but copied anno 1738."—In England, and in some other "countries, the laws allow of five per cent, and even an action "at law for the payment of it. This is often allowable in a "trading country; and, as it is the common practice in Eng-"land, I shall not blame any one for taking or even exacting "interest-money; therefore will say nothing against it in gene-"ral: but, in my own regard, I am persuaded it is not war-"rantable in conscience, but in three cases; viz. either for a "gain ceasing, as merchants lend money which they would "otherwise employ in trade, *lucrum cessans*: or, secondly, some "detriment the lender suffers by it, *damnum emergens*: or, third-"ly, some hazard in the principal money, by its being exposed "to some more than ordinary danger in being recovered safe-"ly. Some time afterwards the said Alban Butler was convin-"ced there was no occasion of scruple in receiving interest for "money, so that it was at a moderate or low rate of interest; "and that there was reason to believe the borrower made full "the advantage of the money that he paid for it by the interest."

Our Author's love of learning continued with him to the last. Literary topics were frequently the subject of his familiar conver-

sation. He was a great admirer of what is called the simple style of writing; and once mentioned that if he could acquire a style by wishing for it, he should wish for that of Herodotus. He thought the orator appeared too much in Cicero's philosophical works, except his Offices: that work he considered to be one of the most perfect models of writing which have come down to us from antiquity. He professed to discover the man of high breeding and elegant society in the commentaries of Cæsar; and to find expressions in the writings of Cicero which shewed a person accustomed to address a mob, the *fæx Romani populi*. He believed the works of Plato had been much interpolated; and once mentioned, without blame, Father Hardouin's opinion, that they were wholly of a fabrication of the middle age. Of the modern Latin poets, he most admired Wallius, and in an illness desired his poems to be read to him. He himself sometimes composed Latin poetry. He preferred the *Paradisus Animæ* to its rival prayer-book, the *Cœleste Palmetum*. Of the last he spoke with great contempt. The little rhyming offices, which fill a great part of it, are not very interesting; but, the explanation in it of the psalms, in our Lady's office, of the psalms in the office for the dead, of the gradual and seven penitential psalms, and of the psalms sung at vespers and complin, is excellent. A person would deserve well of the English catholics who should translate it into English. The Cœleste Palmetum was the favourite prayer-book of the Low Countries. By Foppen's *Bibliotheca Belgica*, it appears that the first edition of it was printed at Cologne in 1660, and that, during the first eight years after its publication, more than 14,000 copies of it were sold. Most readers will be surprised, when they are informed that our Author preferred the sermons of Bossuet to those of Bourdaloue: but in this he has not been absolutely singular; the celebrated Cardinal de Maury has avowed the same opinion; and, what is still more extraordinary, it has also been avowed by Father Neuville. Bossuet's Discourse upon Universal History may be ranked among the noblest efforts of human genius that ever issued from the press. In the chronological part of it, the scenes pass rapidly but distinctly; almost every word is a sentence and every sentence presents an idea, or excites a sentiment of the sublimest kind. The third part of it, containing his reflections on the events which produced the

rise and fall of the ancient empires of the earth, is not inferior to the celebrated work of Montesquieu on the Greatness and Fall of the Roman empire; but, in the second part, the genius of Bossuet appears in its full strength. He does not lead his reader through a maze of argumentation, he never appears in a stretch of exertion; but, with a continued splendor of imagery, magnificence of language, and vehemence of argument, which nothing can withstand, he announces the sublime truths of the christian religion, and the sublime evidence that supports them, with a grandeur and force that overpower and disarm resistance. Something of this is to be found in many passages of his sermons; but, in general, both the language and the arguments of them are forced and unnatural. His letters to the nuns are very interesting. Let those who affect to talk slightingly of the devotions of the religious, recollect that the sublime Bossuet bestowed a considerable portion of his time upon them. The same pen that wrote the discourse on Universal History, the funeral oration of the Prince of Condé, and the History of the Variations, was at the command of every religious who requested from Bossuet a letter of advice, or consolation. "Was he at Versailles, was he engaged on any literary "work of importance, was he employed on a pastoral visit of his "diocese?—still," say the Benedictine editors of his works, "he "always found time to write to his correspondents on spiritual "concerns." In this he had a faithful imitator in our Author. No religious community addressed themselves to him who did not find in him a zealous director, an affectionate and steady friend. For several among the religious he had the highest personal esteem. Those, who remember him during his residence at St Omers, will recollect his singular respect to Mrs More, the superior of the English convent of Austins at Bruges. He was, in general, an enemy to the private pensions of nuns; (See Boudon's Letter, *Sur le relachement qui s'est introduit dans l'observation du vœu de pauvreté*. (Lettres de Boudon, vol. 1. p. 500.) but in this, as in every other instance, he wished the reform, when determined upon, to proceed gently and gradually.

All who have had an opportunity of observing the English communities since their arrival in this country, have been edified by their amiable and heroic virtues. Their resignation to the persecution which they have so undeservedly suffered, their pa-

tience, their chearfulness, their regular discharge of their religious observances, and, above all, their noble confidence in Divine Providence, have gained them the esteem of all who know them. At a village near London, a small community of Carmelites lived for several months, almost without the elements of fire, water, or air. The two first, (for water unfortunately was there a vendible commodity), they could little afford to buy; and from the last (their dress confining them to their shed) they were excluded. In the midst of this severe distress, which no spectator could behold unmoved, they were happy. Submission to the will of God, fortitude and chearfulness, never deserted them. A few human tears would fall from them, when they thought of their convent; and with gratitude, the finest of human feelings, they abounded; in other respects they seemed of another world. "Whatever," says Dr Johnston, "withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over "the present, advances us in the dignity of human beings." It would be difficult to point out persons to whom this can be better applied then these venerable ladies,—whose lives are more influenced by the past, the distant, or the future, or so little influenced by the present.

Our Author was not so warm, on any subject, as the calumnies against the religious of the middle age: he considered the civilization of Europe to be owing to them. When they were charged with idleness, he used to remark the immense tracts of land, which, from the rudest state of nature, they converted to a high state of husbandry in the Hercynian wood, the forests of Champagne and Burgundy, the morasses of Holland, and the fens of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire. When ignorance was imputed to them, he used to ask, what author of antiquity had reached us, for whose works we were not indebted to the monks? He could less endure that they should be considered as instruments of absolute power to enslave the people; when this was intimated, he observed, that, during the period which immediately followed the extinction of the Carlovingian dinasty, when the feudal law absolutely triumphed over monarchy, the people were wholly left to themselves, and must have sunk into an absolute state of barbarism, if it had not been for the religious establishments. Those, he said, softened the manners of the conquerors, afforded refuge

to the vanquished, preserved an intercourse between nations; and, when the feudal chiefs rose to the rank of monarchs, stood as a rampart between them and the people. He thought St Thomas of Canterbury a much injured character. He often pointed out that rich tract of country, which extends from St Omers to Liege, as a standing refutation of those who asserted that convents and monasteries were inimical to the populousness of a country: he observed, that the whole income of the smaller houses, and two thirds of the revenues of the greater houses, were constantly spent within twenty miles round their precincts; that their lands were universally let at low rents; that every abbey had a school for the instruction of its tenants, and that no human institution was so well calculated to promote the arts of painting, architecture and sculpture, works in iron and bronze, and every other species of workmanship, as abbeys or monasteries, and their appendages. "Thus" he used to say, "though the country in view was originally a marsh, and has for more than a century wholly survived its commerce, it is the most populous country in Europe; and presents on the face of it as great a display of public and private strength, wealth and affluence, as can be found in any other part of the world."—Fortunately for him he did not live to be witness to the domiciliary visit which in our times it has received from France. What would he have thought, if any person had told him, that, before the expiration of the century in which he lived, the French themselves, would, in perfect hatred of Christ, destroy the finest churches in France?—At their profanation of his favourite church of St Bertine in the town of St Omers, that is said to have happened which Victor Vitensis relates to have happened in the persecution of the Vandals: (Hist. Pers. Van. 31.) "Introeuntes maximo cum furore, corpus Christi et sanguinem pavimento sparserunt, et illud pollutus pedibus calcaverunt."

## XVII.

Our Author enjoyed through life a good state of health, but somewhat impaired it by intense application to study. Some years before his decease he had a slight stroke of the palsy which affected his speech. He died on the 15th of May 1773, in the 63d year of his age. A decent monument of marble was raised

to his memory in the chapel of the English college at St Omers, with the following inscription upon it, composed by Mr Bannister

Hic jacet
R. D. ALBANUS BUTLER (Bouteillier) Prænobilis Anglus.
Sacerdos et Alumnus Collegii Anglorum Duaci.
Ibidem S. T. Professor Postmodum Missionarius in Patria.
Præses II. Collegii Regii Anglorum Audomari.
Vicarius Generalis
Illustrissimorum Philomelien. Deboren. Atrebaten. Audomaren.
Ex vetustâ Ortus prosapiâ
In utrisque Angliæ et Galliæ Regnis
Ampla et Florente.
Suavissimis Moribus,
Summis acceptissimus, Infimis benignus,
Omnium neccessitatibus inserviens,
Pro Deo.
Propter Doctrinam et Ingenium, Doctissimus,
Propter Pietatem, Bonis Omnibus,
Percharus.
Nobilissimæ Iuventutis Institutionem,
Sacrarum Virginum curam,
Reverendissimorum Antistitum negotia,
Suscepit, promovit, expedivit,
Opere, Scriptis, Hortatubus.
Sanctorum, rebus gestis a Pueritiâ inhærens,
Acta omnia pernoscens,
Mentem et Sapientiam altê imbibens,
Multa scripsit de Sanctorum vitis,
Plena Sanctorum Spiritu, librata judicio polita stylo,
Summæ ubertatis et omnigenæ eruditionis.
Apostolicæ sedis et omnis officii semper observantissimus.
Pie obiit 15. Mensis Maii 1773.
Natus annis 63. Sacerdos 39. Præses 7.
Hoc mœrens posuit Carolus Butler
Monumentum Pietatis suæ in Patruum Amatissimum.

6 NO 63

*FINIS.*